



English- Area of Study 3

Persuasive Techniques

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Emotional Appeal

Emotional appeals, reach out to the reader's feelings, rather than appealing to a reader's logical or reasoned responses.

Example of Emotional appeals-

Appeal to family values

This appeal is based on the belief that the traditional family of mum, dad and the kids, is the best way to live and provide a healthy, nurturing environment for children.

Appeals to family values often link problem children and teenagers with marriage breakdown.

This can also appeal to people's desire for security, protection and certainty. An appeal like this is very strong, because threats to family values are often related with threats to society itself.

Appeal to a sense of fear

This plays on people's fears and can be very useful because people tend to respond emotionally when their security, safety, country or those close to them are under threat.

Appeals to fear usually present an extreme case scenario which means people's attitudes can be easily manipulated, because of their need to feel safe from dangerous situations.

Appeal to the hip-pocket nerve

This makes readers feel concerned for their financial well being.

This appeal can be used in a positive or a negative way. It relates to patrons and the daily cost of living. The positive form writers use, can cause happiness and relieve tension when financial gain is around the corner. The negative form can cause anger and anxiety.

Appeal to patriotism

This appeal relates to our feelings of attachment and loyalty to the values and culture of our country. Patriotism is a love of one's country. We Australians (being a part of this country) would defend anything that is ours, even if we don't necessarily like it.

Appeal to patriotism stirs passionate responses.

Other emotional appeals are-

- **Appeal to a desire for tradition and custom**
- **Appeal to consequences**
- **Appeal to pity**
- **Appeal to flattery**
- **Appeal to ridicule**
- **Appeal to spite**

Tone

Tone is the mood or feeling of a piece of writing or speech. It can be defined as the underlying attitude the writer takes towards a topic or their audience. Tone can change in a piece of writing when the attitudes or feelings of the writer change. Tone combines with other persuasive techniques such as repetition, alliteration and emotive language. If the tone of a piece is very aggressive, then the language will be forceful and persuasive, or if the tone is calm the tone will seem lighter and more reasoned. A writer uses tone in order to generate a desired emotional response and to position the audience to agree with the writer's point of view.

Tone Words:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formal ○ Informal ○ Authorative ○ Dismissive ○ Reasonable ○ Diplomatic ○ Sentimental ○ Earnest ○ Skeptical ○ Ironic ○ Pleading ○ Mocking ○ Sarcastic ○ serious ○ imploring ○ Optimistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calm ○ joyous ○ cheerful ○ excited ○ passionate ○ modest ○ playful ○ humorous ○ comic ○ Vivid ○ compassionate ○ light ○ Whimsical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sympathetic ○ Sorrowful ○ Somber ○ Tragic ○ Apathetic ○ empathetic ○ condescending ○ mournful ○ Disappointed ○ Concerned ○ grim ○ solemn ○ frustrated ○ disheartened ○ pretentious ○ Restrained ○ Antagonistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Angry ○ vulgar ○ Accusing ○ Aggressive ○ Bitter ○ Outraged ○ scathing ○ violent ○ Harsh ○ Strong ○ Firm ○ Scorning ○ Cruel ○ Demeaning ○ patronizing ○ Cynical ○ Pessimistic ○ Accusatory ○ Egotistical ○ Arrogant ○ Frank
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Examples:

"I don't know if they poked the girls with sticks or looked in their mouths; if they didn't I'm sure they would've liked to."

The writer uses a vulgar and sarcastic tone in arguing the point that the debutant ball is outdated and is just there to put young girls on display for marriage. Using sarcasm to address this issue emphasizes the writer's point of view and the vulgar tone puts a negative connotation on the issue.

"Genetic testing is a serious subject, one requiring sound advice and effective processes."

The writer uses a calm and serious tone in addressing the issue of genetic testing. By recognising the issue as 'serious' the audience is positioned to listen attentively.

Alliteration

Alliteration is used to get the readers attention by repeating the consonant of the beginning of words and persuades by emphasising words such as "Today is a **dull day**". The repetition of the letter 'D' emphasises the word 'dull' and positions the reader to feel sympathy for the writer. Alliteration can also work with other persuasive techniques such as repetition, tone, and puns to attract the attention of readers and add emphasis, especially in headlines. "Mobiles make me mad!" this alliteration also has repetition and tone; the tone is angry and frustrated with the exclamation mark at the end of mad.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that is a gross exaggeration. People often use expressions such as "I nearly died laughing," "I was hopping mad," and "I tried a thousand times." Such statements are not literally true, but people make them to sound impressive or to emphasize something, such as a feeling, effort, or reaction. "I could sleep for a year" this hyperbole is saying the writer could sleep for a long time and positions the reader to think that the writer is exhausted and maybe have been working hard.

Generalisations

Generalisations, like any other form of persuasive technique, aims to persuade or influence the reader or the intended audience to think a certain way or change their opinions. Defined as 'a sweeping statement claiming or asserting that something is true for most or all people because it is true in one or some cases' (Insight English for Year 11), generalisations are used often in persuasive texts as they are quite effective.

However, unlike other persuasive techniques, the use of generalisations can be closely related to the use of peer pressure. This is because generalisations intend to convince their audience that 'everyone else' thinks that way so it is therefore the correct and acceptable way to think. By stating that 'teens are the technology obsessed, money hungry generation', the audience assumes that every teenager is the technology obsessed, money hungry generations that they are painted out to be, whereas this may not be the case for all teenagers.

By making their audience believe that everyone in a particular group, like teenagers, act the same way, do the same things and think the same way, generalisations produce pre-conceived ideas or prejudices in their audiences about these groups. If the generalisation is about a group that the reader belongs to, this may convince the reader that they are the only one in their group who thinks differently, which will influence them to change their opinion.

Connotations

Connotations are the implied meanings of words, aimed to create either a negative or positive impact on the reader/s making them think differently, depending on the choice of words. Connotations are used frequently in day-to-day language, as can be observed when describes a car. A BMW can be described as classy, elegant, posh, flashy, upper crust or over-the-top, too expensive, etc. Whereas a Daewoo could be described as junk, unsafe, cheap, dodgy or a common car, family car, etc.

Connotations positions readers to think/portray a view, either positive or negative, as a result of the description given to the audience. Some words with similar meanings have slightly different connotations that can completely change the opinions of the readers. Words like ‘classy’ and ‘elegant’ convey a positive view to the readers, whereas ‘unsafe’ and ‘cheap’ convey a negative view towards the subject.

Clichés:

- are over-used and worn-out phrases, that are often colloquial, that most people are familiar with
- often cleverly used in newspaper headlines
- persuade the reader by helping them feel familiar with the material and communicate meaning quickly
- have a negative impact when used instead of well-constructed language
- persuade the reader by giving a humorous edge to an extremely serious claim in some situations
- attract readers’ attention although when the reader doesn’t understand the cliché, the impact is lost

Examples include: “Fit as a fiddle”, “Turning over a new leaf”, “Scarce as hens’ teeth”, “As happy as a pig in mud” and “Don’t count your chickens before they’re hatched”.

Inclusive language

- uses phrases such as “we all agree that...” or “we all feel that...”, “our local community...” or “it’s commonly known that...”
- is usually combined with emotional appeals
- is a direct invitation for the audience to agree with the writer’s or speakers’ contention
- positions by playing on the audiences’ sense of belonging and wanting to be included
- makes the audience feel engaged with the issue
- can also sound friendly, as if they are acquainted with the audience

Examples include: “We are all going to experience serious effects of severe water shortages” and “We all agree that Hawthorn is the better team”.

Evidence:

evidence can be presented as information, facts or statements used to support a belief, opinion or point of view. Evidence positions the reader to believe that you have full knowledge of what you are talking about, adds strength to the writer's point of view and often seems objective and indisputable.

Evidence comes in many forms:

- Statistics
- Expert advice
- Quotation statements
- Research
- Facts
- Recorded sound and images
- Expert opinion
- Testimony

Anecdotal evidence: brief story that is used to support your point of view but isn't as strong as facts or figures.

How it persuades

Evidence positions the reader to share a point of view because it is objective and appears difficult to challenge. When using statistics, for example, the sample used to generate the statistics data may be so small that any conclusions would be disputed.

A pun!

A pun is a [phrase](#) that deliberately exploits confusion between similar-sounding [words](#) for [humorous](#) or [rhetorical](#) effect. It is identified by humour and usually found in the heading of an article. It is used to capture the readers attention and compel them to read it. It places the reader in a joking state of mind and gives them a clear understanding of what the article will be about.

Examples of a pun:

“Demand puts nappy recycler in the poo”

“Junking the fatty foods”

Emotive Language!

Language used to create emotions or aims to make the viewer react in some way. It evokes emotion in the reader and sets the mood of the article. It overstates and dramatises a word to make it sound more serious and persuades the reader to agree.

Examples of Emotive Language:

- Vicious
- Vile
- Heartbreaking
- Spectacular
- Horrifying
- Marvellous

Attacks- An attack is a negatively based sentence used to belittle a person, object, place or thing.

- It is used in writing to undermine, demoralise and put down an opponent to strengthen the writer's position, purpose and point of view.
- *E.g.* "This failing, uncaring Premier has once again shown his contempt for problem gamblers"
- An attack not only belittles the thing the writer is attacking but it also brings the attack on the audience because of the nature of the technique being so forceful and forward. The negativity that follows an attack compels the audience to agree with the statement because it is so dismissing of the other side.

Reason and Logic- Persuasive reasoning is a powerful tool used to argue a point of view in a logical way.

- Reason and logic creates well-supported evidence to show a stronger position towards a point of view. This persuades the reader through understanding the points brought forth making the point matter of fact and unquestionable.
- *E.g.* "Smoking is bad for you because it leads to an early death"
- Reason and logic positions the reader to be more open and accepting towards your point of view.

Metaphor- a metaphor is used to describe one thing in terms of another unrelated subject. Using an unrelated subject to help visualise the situation they do not understand commonly uses a metaphor to help the reader understand a point. It positions the reader to think outside the box and makes them view the situation in a more understandable way. Metaphors compare two things, pointing out a similarity between the two. It differs from a simile in that it does not use the words 'like' or 'as'. In the following example the Stock market is being compared to a volcano in that they both erupt forcefully-

- *E.g.-* "the stock-market erupted causing fire storms all over the world."

Rhetorical Questions

A rhetorical question requires no answer.

The question itself implies the answer; therefore, it doesn't need to be answered.

e.g. How stupid can the Prime Minister be?

Rhetorical questions position the audience to accept the implied answer.

Voice – Active/Passive

An active voice emphasises the subject of the sentence, rather than the action. The subject of the sentence does the action.

e.g. John jumped the log.

In this sentence, John is the subject. He does the action- jumping-which makes this the Active voice.

The use of passive voice is where the subject receives the action-

e.g. The log was jumped by John.

John is still the subject, but the sentence now takes on a passive tone.

An active voice persuades by directly giving the message, usually in short, direct sentences. These direct, strong sentences, create immediacy and strong visual image. This is valuable in combining together with emotive language and emotional appeals in order to position readers to think in a certain way.

Repetition and the Power of Three

This is the repeated use of words, phrases, images or ideas in a sentence or overall text. Repetition may take the form of repeating of the same sounds- alliteration and assonance, which creates a forceful tone, or maybe the repetition of words to emphasise a point or the repetition of images to create an overall sense or argument.

E.g.

“I have told you once, I have told you twice and now I am telling you a third time, do your homework.”

Power of Three-

Repetition used in groups of three. Often used by politicians in official speeches.

E.g.- “We are strong. We are powerful. We are free.”