

# Rhetorical Analysis Essay: The Basics

okay this lesson video will give you a brief reread of the basics of the AP rhetorical analysis essay we're going to talk about how this essay is a little bit different than a lot of the other essays starting with how it looks and we'll talk more about this in a second but whenever you see a rhetorical analysis essay you'll see a brief bit of information in a paragraph up top followed by a piece of writing that you're being asked to analyze what makes this essay different from the AP synthesis essay or the AP argument essay is that you're actually writing about writing it's kind of like that movie Inception right it's a dream of a dream of a dream of a dream it's kind of like that you're writing about writing. it can get a little confusing you're not really being asked to take a position on a controversy or topic instead you're being asked to analyze the writing and the persuasive tools and tricks that the author of the piece uses to affect and interact with their audience it's a very different kind of writing one of the most important things to remember to do when you approach the AP rhetorical analysis essay is to read the introductory info provided for you in this short little intro paragraph not only will they give you instructions and directions but they're going to tell you who wrote it who the speaker is a writer is they're going to tell you who the intended audience was who the original audience was and they'll even give you insight into their purpose for writing and and you have to be able to talk about all those things intelligently within the writing to sound like you know what you're talking about the biggest mistake a lot of students make [why stanford essay](#) is they skip over this info or they don't pay attention to it for example on this actual AP rhetorical analysis prompt you'll notice this paragraph right here in this paragraph you'll see that they tell us the whole situation they tell us when who and even what they were trying to get across. make sure you read that section carefully and pay attention to that information that introductory information like all good introductions are really important time is really important on this essay as it is with all essays but you have a passage you're supposed to read and you're supposed to be looking for these rhetorical strategies these tools and tricks of persuasion and writing that the author is using it's crucial that before you even start reading the passage you start preparing yourself to look for those strategies you have to read actively the first time through you have to look for the tools and tricks that the author is using of course the difference between the people who do really well on this type of essay and the people who do not has to do with one thing do you know your strategies throughout the year we study these rhetorical strategies we look at them in different ways in different contexts we interact with them we create them at the end of the day you're responsible for knowing as many strategies as you can. that you have a bunch of things to choose to write about and that you spot a bunch of good writing remember the example they give you is not going to be a bad example of writing they're choosing something they're choosing a piece for this test because it is strategic because the author uses lots of tools and tricks. you should have plenty to choose from on top of that you never know what they're going to give you they might tell you a specific strategy to look for like satire in the introductory instructions they might want you to analyze how the author uses satire they've done that before in the past. you need to not only know a lot of strategies but you need to know these strategies very well that's going to be key for your success on this test like all of our essays you need to have a thesis statement make sure to watch our thesis statement video particularly the differences between thesis statements video because that video will really break down for you how a rhetorical analysis thesis statement might be different you usually want to try to discuss three or four strategies unless you're kind of focusing on an overall strategy but that's really difficult to do with a lot of depth but I've got examples of those in that thesis statements video in the thesis statement you'll tell us what strategies you're going to be analyzing and then the rest of that essay you're quoting those strategies you're saying here's the strategy you're giving an example of the strategy from the text and then the most important part is that then you're explaining that strategy you're going to talk about why the author chose the strategy how it worked on the audience this is the tough part and this is where you can really tell whether someone knows their stuff or they don't whether they've really studied or not. when it comes to that explaining if you need some more help number one make sure you know your strategies and then number two there's another lesson video that will help you get into more detail on your explanation of how these strategies work explaining in this essay is just really really important that covers the basics of the rhetorical analysis essay it's pretty straightforward but you have to know the strategies and you have to be prepared to explain them with a lot of depth look at some of our other AP rhetorical analysis essay help videos. that you're prepared for this essay on the AP test.