Rhetorical Analysis

To be EFFECTIVE for CLAIMS, your claims should convey strong and logical interpretations (not simply statements of fact) and each claim must be supported with specific evidence. The claims must show an understanding of author’s essay and use of rhetorical strategies.

To be EFFECTIVE for DATA, you must use evidence appropriately.

Quotation: When you quote from the text, you copy the words exactly as they appear in the original, and you put quotation marks around the words you take from the text.

Paraphrase: When you paraphrase, you put into your own words an idea that the writer conveys in the text. The paraphrase in itself should not convey any interpretation of the writer's ideas; instead, the paraphrase should be your own way of stating the exact idea that the writer conveys.

Summary: When you summarize, you use considerably fewer words to convey a writer's ideas, especially if the writer has developed the ideas in a larger text. You need to make sure that your summary is accurate, that it really does convey concisely the points that the writer develops.

To be EFFECTIVE for COMMENTARY, you must include an analysis of author’s purpose and use of rhetorical strategies. You must also demonstrate the effectiveness of the data cited and explained by the speaker (and to a limited extent, number of examples cited). In general, you must establish the logical connection between a claim and data. Sometimes, the logical connection, the way in which a fact logically supports a claim, will be clear, possibly so clear that not much explanation from the writer is needed. More often, though, the writer needs to supply the commentary; in other words, you need to thoroughly explain how and why a particular piece of evidence is good support for a specific claim.

To be EFFECTIVE for PRECISION, you must master active, precise verbs to invigorate both analytical and persuasive papers. Frequently those choices will help you avoid unnecessary passive voice and excessive use of “is,” “are,” “was,” “were,” “I,” or “we.” This must include the use of rich, colorful, precise language that communicates not just in a functional way, but in a way that moves and enlightens the reader.

To be EFFECTIVE for FLUENCY, you must showcase the rhythm and flow of the language, the sound of word patterns, the way in which the writing plays to the ear, not just to the eye. This also requires mechanical correctness of the piece and these five elements: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar/usage, and paragraphing.

To be EFFECTIVE for VOICE, you must come through the words; it is the heart and soul of the writing, the magic, the wit, the feeling, the life and breath. You must make the piece your own.

8-9: Effective

5-6-7: Adequate

3-4: Inadequate

1-2: Unsuccessful