# Rhetorical Precis

**A Rhetorical Precis can be used for your Introduction Paragraph to a Rhetorical Analysis Essay. It is a commonly used “formula” to put the Rhetorical Situation into paragraph form. It should be four sentences in the following order:**

1. The first sentence includes most of the parts of PIGSAC (speaker, audience, subject, context/medium) with an action verb (illustrated, promoted, epitomized – NEVER said) connecting these points of the triangle with the purpose.

2. The second sentence provides an explanation in your own words of why the author’s purpose has merit.

3. The third sentence includes a summary of two or three strong pieces of data the author uses in support of the purpose.

4. Thesis: This sentence identifies rhetorical strategies and overall tone (or shifts in tone) the speaker uses to effectively achieve their purpose.

Thesis (#4): **Using rhetorical strategies like juxtaposition, metaphor, and repetition, Dr. King moved from ethical and scholarly arguments to emotional and passionate ones in order to effectively catapult the Civil Rights Movement from a regional fight to a national priority.**

Exemplar: In John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*, lines about the rabbits become emblems for the whole relationship between George and Lennie – the quiet-spoken farm laborer and the sweet, impaired cousin he has taken under his arm – to challenge complacent readers on their ideas of wealth, class, and even the American Dream itself. The idea of two cogs, not quite fitting into the machinery of normal society, yet able to form a brotherly bond and help each other almost to the point of success, gives the audience endearing hope until the world slaps them down. Just as Lenny asks, “And will there be rabbits, George?”; George replies, “Yeah, Lennie. There'll be rabbits,” both statements symbolize the Dream and the knowing disillusionment of that Dream, a perfect paradox. Through narrative, symbolism, and vivid imagery, Steinbeck wrenches his audience into they irony of hoping for Lenny and George’s success while all the while, knowing they will fail.

Claim Data Commentary

**Claim Data Commentary is the standard way to make an argument in the body paragraphs of a persuasive essay. Since all three of the free-response essays have elements of persuasion, using this format works for all of them.**

1. The claim, sometimes called topic sentence should always be the first sentence, and should almost always include an element of the original thesis (For example, if your paper argues that the author legitimizes his position through a logical appeal, that should be incorporated in a claim.)

2. Data is any evidence. This includes direct quotes, paraphrasing, facts, statistics, and a whole range of possibilities. It should be introduced with some context about the situation or speaker. Data does not necessarily have to come second in the structure of the paragraph, but is necessary to support your claim.

3. Commentary is original thought and arguments. This is your unique take or spin and helps the reader connect the dots from the claim to the evidence.

4. You should always write a connector sentence to “new data”.

5. You should always practice a transition sentence from one body paragraph (claim topic #1) to the next body paragraph (claim topic #2) or if you are finished, to the conclusion.