

# Writing for Academic and Research Audiences

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# Overview of Presentation

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## ➤ Overview of presentation

- General points about writing
- Conceptualizing “audiences” (of text)
- Locating concept of writing and audience in classical rhetoric
- Discussing rhetorical modes and patterns
- Considering specific audiences (academic, research)
- Writing manuscripts for journal publication

# 1 Minute Question/Comment Break

**Think for a minute about the following:**

- What is *writing*?
- What is *audience*?
- Where does the concept of audience fit into writing?

# General Points about Writing

## ➤ Old debates and perspectives:

- Writing as a “product” Vs. Writing as a “Process”
- As a product:
  - Traditional view
  - Focus on “form” (e.g., grammar & mechanics, etc.)
- As a process
  - Recursive
  - Focus on “meaning”
  - Includes several stages [prewriting, writing, rewriting]

# Conceptualizing Audiences (of Text)

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- **Composition teachers say that mature writers need to have:**
  - “Audience Considerations”
  - “Audience Adaptability”
  - “Audience Awareness”

# 1 Minute Question/Comment Break

- **Take about 30 seconds and write one or two words (good or bad) that you would use to characterize the first teacher that commented on a very dear piece of your writing.**

# Conceptualizing Audiences (of Text)

## ➤ Some opinions about *audience*

- An “outer voice”
- Mean, nice, friendly, hostile, crazy, stupid
- A nuisance; people who cause conflict
- People we “serve”
- People who facilitate writing development
- People who facilitate our persuasive appeal
- Others?

# Conceptualizing Audiences (of Text)

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## ➤ Audience has multiple meanings and characterizations

- A fiction (Walter Ong)
  - Can be invented
  - Can be invoked
  - Figment of a writer's imagination
- Evolves (non-static)
- Can be addressed
- Can be ignored



# Conceptualizing Audiences (of Text)

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## ➤ Some key points to consider about audience

- A profound awareness of audience is the sign of an experienced writer
- Audience adaptability and awareness is fundamental
- Audience enables social interaction and cooperation
- → A central focus in *persuasive* discourse
- → Audience is central to rhetorical tradition

# Question/Comment Break

➤ **Any questions/thoughts?**

# Rhetorical Modes and Patterns

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- **What is rhetoric and what is its relationship to writing and to audience?**
  - The standard locus of western intellectual tradition for the study of audience responses has been rhetoric (Walter Ong)
  - Rhetorical Traditions
    - From Orality (Greek; Plato, Aristotle)
    - Extended to include persuasion in Writing/Composition

# Rhetorical Modes and Patterns

## ➤ What is rhetoric?

- Basic Definition: The “art” of persuasion in speaking and writing.
- Classical Rhetoric
  - **Aristotle:** “Speech is the joint result of three things – the speaker, the subject, and the person addressed” (See Aristotle’s Rhetoric – Book II)
  - **Aristotle:** “In order to argue effectively, one must use the available means of persuasion”
  - **Plato:** “classify the types of discourse and the types of souls, and the various ways in which the souls are affected” (See Plato’s Phaedrus)

# Rhetorical Modes and Patterns

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## ➤ Three key principles

- Appeal to Audience (affect the “soul” of the audience)
- Aristotelian (three persuasive “proofs”)
  - **Ethos** – establish/appeal to author’s character; moral competence; authority, wisdom, credibility, virtue
  - **Pathos** – appeal to emotions of audience; writing in a way that induces emotions
  - **Logos** – appeal to reason and logic
- Criticized as “limiting” by some rhetoricians

# Rhetorical Modes and Patterns

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## ➤ Sample rhetorical devices

- Antanagoge – placing a beneficial point next to a fault
- Diacope – repetition of a word or phrase that is broken by one word or phrase
- Antiphrasis – one word irony
- Oxymoron - a two word paradox of opposing words
- Exemplum – using, as an example, an illustrative story.

# Rhetorical Modes and Patterns

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## ➤ Rhetorical modes/persuasive options

- Cause and Effect
- Classification/Division
- Comparison/Contrast
- Definition
- Description
- Example/Exemplification
- Process
- Narration

# Question/Comment Break

➤ **Any quick questions/thoughts?**



# Considering Specific Audiences

- **It is the responsibility of the author to consider, adapt to, and become aware of, audience.**

Academic Audiences	Research/Workplace Audiences
Include research audiences	Include academic audiences
Teaching/learning context	Workforce/workplace/world context
Structured didactics; learning exploration; aiming for perfection	Expectations of perfection; unstructured didactics
Context-generic, with some room for context specificity (subject area/discipline)	Context-specific, with limited room for non-specificity (client-based needs/response)
Process of learning and development	Process of application of learning
“Academic” writing – jargon full, text book-informed; attending to needs of expert audience	“Technical” writing – jargon free; subject specific; consideration for layman audience
Almost “exaggerated” expressions of research knowledge (proving academic knowledge)	Non-embellished (demonstrating “industrial” knowledge within the limits of convention and best practices)

# Writing Manuscripts for Journal Publication

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## ➤ Important points to consider

- What are you going to write?
- How are you going to write it?
- Have you considered the rhetorical options that are of preference or interest to the journal you are interested in?
- Have you published in this journal before? If so, do you believe that you have adapted that writing style to the needs of this audience?
- Do you feel like you “know” your audience or is your audience a fictitious character in your mind?

# Important points to consider

- Think about these questions but do not get stuck on them. the best way to write is to *write*!!
- When you **read** your work, and fix what you need.....
  - when **you become your own audience** and read your work later, after taking a break from it.....
  - When you play the role of “reader” of your own writing.....
  - .....You will be able to modify your draft to reflect the understandings you have of what constitutes good writing
- This strategy will help you to improve as a writer.

# THANK YOU!

Questions | Comments | Thoughts?

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