

FRAMING TEMPLATE

Directions: for your assigned texts, please fill out this form and email it to me before class time the day you are to present to the class.

- For texts you frame with a partner, each partner should email me whatever parts of the following that he/she dealt with
- For text that you do solo, please fill out the whole form and email it to me

Note: you do **not** have to fill out the paragraph (section)-level questions. Those are provided simply to show you how to do it if you think that approach will help you interrogate the text.

Framing an artifact has 4 purposes:

- Analyze the key components
- Point out rhetorical moves that we can use in our own writing
- Make connections (if possible) with other texts we have read
 - How does this text shed light on previous texts? How does it give new insights into previous texts? How does it disagree or agree with previous texts?
- Spark discussion with insightful questions & provocative quotations from the text

Framing is a presentation.

1. In other words, it is part of the oral presentation aspect of this course. It is one of the chances for you to practice and improve your public speaking.
2. So don't simply stand in front of the class and say "The answer to #1 is..."
3. Make your framing presentation a speech. You need an attention-grabber to capture our interest and make it "important" to us.
4. Establish *kairos*--How can we (in 21W.747) adapt for our own use this theory or concept or rhetorical techniques or structure or rhetorical move or ideas?
5. Make the details significant to members of our class. For example, how might this rhetor's idea influence the way we see the world? How does it influence the way *you* see the world? You have to be specific.
 - a. For instance, "On page 4, 2nd full paragraph from the top, this rhetor shows us one way to incorporate a quotation"—then you read the passage aloud, pointing out the significant technique
 - b. For example, "On page 234, last paragraph, the rhetor shows us how to apply his theory to a specific example"—then read the passage & explain what exactly how the rhetor accomplished it
 - c. For example, "On page 2, 2nd and 3rd paragraphs, the rhetor shows us how to summarize previous research or theories"—then read passage
 - d. For example, "In the 4th paragraph on page 12, the rhetor asserts that everyone desires power over others. Do you think that's true? If so, is it a good or bad thing?"

Each Framing has 3 parts:

Close Reading, Moves We Can Use, and Leading the Discussion

CLOSE READING: As Selzer and Strang say, the following areas/questions need to be addressed in your frame (you can ask these as questions to the class, **but you need to have your own answers at your fingertips in case there is disagreement**, etc.):

Work the answers to the following into a smooth presentation, not just answers to questions. Note, you should not follow the structure of the text you are framing—ask yourself, what does your audience need to know first?

1. **Intended (Target Audience):** Who is the **intended audience** of this text? What evidence do you have that you are correct about who the audience is? There is both internal & external evidence.
 - a. **Internal Evidence:** For example, LBJ seemed to always start his speeches with “My fellow Americans,” so that quote would be evidence that he was addressing Americans. Yet since he exclusively quotes only former Democratic presidents, that is evidence that his target audience was really Americans who were Democrats or had liberal leanings.
 - b. **External Evidence:** Who are the people sitting in the room during the speech? Who are the presumed extended audience (radio, TV, etc.)? Where was the text first published (every journal/magazine/newspaper has its own target audience—and its editors select articles that will appeal to that audience; often looking at the kinds of ads in a magazine tells you at least the socio-economic and age level of the audience)
2. **Who is the implied audience?** What evidence supports your idea?
 - a. Diction, tone, terms explained and those the rhetor assumes the audience knows, allusions explained and left unexplained, attitude toward audience, complexity of style, etc.
3. **Rhetor’s Major Purpose(s):** What is the rhetor’s **major purpose** in writing this text? What motivates the text (what **previous research or argument or rhetorical situation**)? For professional rhetoric articles (which is what we will mostly be framing), the purpose (or motivation) is likely to be something like “the rhetor is responding to some “incorrect” or “incomplete” interpretation of a text or is elaborating upon or disagreeing with an existing rhetorical theory, or the rhetor is using the artifact/topic to illustrate something else such as exploring some author’s world view or explaining a genre). Give evidence to support your claim.
4. **Rhetor’s Research Question or Task:** For the professional texts by rhetoricians, this will usually be found stated explicitly, so read it aloud to us or paraphrase in your own words. Sometimes there are secondary research questions as well.
5. **Rhetor’s Answer to her Research Question(s):** This might or might not be the Major Claim.
6. **Rhetor’s Major Claim:** What is the rhetor’s **major claim** (thesis) in this artifact? How do you know (Give evidence to prove you claim).
7. **Rhetor’s Secondary Claims:** Often there are several significant, secondary claims in a pro article and sometimes in a political speech as well

8. **Who disagrees with the Rhetor's Claims and why?** Give evidence.
9. **Rhetor's Major Reasons:** Remember that Reasons are assertions, not evidence. As Booth says, we *make up* Reasons, but we *find* Evidence (i.e., Evidence exists independent of us).
10. **Types of Evidence:** What are the major **types of evidence** the rhetor uses? (i.e., don't give every piece of evidence; rather, categorize the types of evidence—see the *Rhetorical Tool Chest* for the 8 most common types of evidence). Are those types of evidence the most effective for this type of argument? If not, what would be more effective **for the rhetor's particular target audience**? What would be more effective for you?
11. **Key Terms, Concepts, and Ideas:** What are the key concepts and/or terms that we should pay attention to in this text? In Burke's terminology, what are the God and Devil terms that other terms cluster around?
12. **Arrangement: What are the structural patterns of the artifact?:** Even if there are no headings, every written artifact has sections. Name for us the rhetor's **introductory strategy** (does she start with a question? An anecdote? A problem to be solved? A quotation? A hypothesis, etc.). Does she use **headings** (if so, are they useful)? What is the **function of each section**? Is there a **lit review**? (if so, tell us the inclusive paragraph or page numbers; if so, why does she do so in this particular case --to show how her contribution adds to the concept? To show how hers improves or disagrees with a theory? etc.). If not a lit review, does she provide background info? How does she incorporate the background info (note—do not tell us what the background info is because we have read the text. Instead focus on her technique for introducing the background info). As shown in Selzer's analysis of White's "Education," the ideas that are developed first and last in a text get the most attention and are usually seen by the rhetor to be the most important. How does she **lead into her Conclusion**?
13. **Rhetor's Assumptions:** Some of a rhetor's assumptions might be stated; some will be unstated (e.g., they may be cultural commonplaces or perhaps the rhetor is unconscious of her own assumptions). Give evidence to support your claims about the rhetor's assumptions. For instance, I have stated in class that I believe that studying rhetoric is useful and important. My *unstated* assumption might be that effective communication in general is crucial regardless of your academic discipline, and your evidence would include the fact that I give a lot of detail in my assignments (hence trying to avoid any miscommunication), that I send email reminders about assignments due, etc.
14. **Rhetor's Style and tone:** What terms would you use to describe the overall style? Give a couple of examples. If the rhetor uses metaphors, vivid language, analogies, etc., point out one or two and explain why the rhetor is probably using them and what their effect is intended to be on the *intended audience*. What is the overall tone of the text—e.g., happy, serious, angry, sarcastic, etc. Tone will vary more often with texts not written by professional rhetoricians.
15. **Connections between this text and other texts we've read:** Does this text support, attack, agree with, disagree with, give us a new way to think about some earlier text we've encountered in class?

MOVES WE CAN USE

1. In this section, you point on techniques the class can adopt for its own writing and persuasion. For instance, explaining exactly how the rhetor does a lit review or how she introduces a quotation or comments on a quotation, or how she enhances her ethos in an interesting or unusual way. You should not explore absolutely every sentence in your report, but you should point out elements that either struck you as particularly well done or that you hadn't been sure about how to do yourself.

LEADING THE DISCUSSION

The Close Reading is given primarily to be sure that you and your audience are “on the same page” in terms of **what** the text says and **how** it says it. The discussion is the more important part of framing since it will involve everyone. We will use two major techniques for sparking further discussion: “thought questions” and provocative quotations. You will need at least 2 of each.

Thoughtful Questions for you to ask the class:

Ask questions about the artifact to launch the discussion.

- A good practice in formulating discussion questions is to **ask yourself**:
 - **if the question will stimulate debate, arguments, and different opinions**, then it is a good question
 - **If you yourself are looking forward to hearing what a variety of your classmates have to say in response**, it is a good question
 - If the question asks responders to compare or contrast this reading with some earlier class reading (i.e., it asks readers to make connections), it is probably also a good question
- Hallmarks of **bad** questions
 - A bad question can be answered by “yes” or “no”
 - A bad question asks responders to call upon information they cannot know (e.g., for an article that analyzes Hitler’s “My Battle,” asking if the critic accounted for all the elements in Hitler’s text is a dead end—since probably no one in the class has read Hitler’s text).

Here are some guidelines for developing strong questions:

- Good questions generally **ask why** some part of the reading takes the form it does or **how** some key term, claim, or evidence might fit a concept or theory.
 - Because they ask for interpretation, “how” and “why” questions lead to higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, comparison, evaluation) about the work and the issues it raises, and about how the specific claims or evidence from this work link to those from the other readings.
- Good questions are **open-ended**, meaning that they invite multiple responses.
 - These kinds of questions recognize that readers will have different perspectives and interpretations and such questions attempt to engage readers in dialogue with each other.
- Good discussion questions are also **specific**—they don’t try to ask about the text as a whole, but instead highlight and isolate particular examples, claims, or passages and ask people to look at them closely and draw connections between

these passages and the themes we're addressing. Constructing strong questions depends on *careful reading*.

- They are also “live” questions, in that they are questions that you're really wondering about and grappling with.
 - A good starting point is to highlight intriguing, surprising, confusing, or contentious claims as you read.
 - How are these claims supported and developed?
 - How does the evidence fit the concepts or claims it presents?
 - Where does this reading align with or seem to conflict with other readings from the class?
- Good discussion questions are *clearly stated*. They do not need to be repeated or reworded to be understood.
- Some of things you *might* ask about include;
 - **Rhetor's Ethos**: What words or phrases best describe the rhetor's overall **ethos** in the text? Give evidence.
 - **Rhetor's use of Pathos**: Although pathos is not often an important feature of professional rhetorical essays, it is often a major factor in other kinds of texts (political, personal essays, etc.). Give quotations and explain what emotion(s) they appeal to (see the Rhetorical Tool Chest “Pathos: 15 Common Appeals”)
 - **Rhetor's use of Logos**: Remember that a Claim is supported by one or more Reasons, and each Reason is proven with Evidence and Evidence to connected to (is shown to be relevant to) the Claim and Reason by the Assumption (also called the Warrant). Often the assumptions are commonplaces and hence do not need to be articulated by the rhetor, but for analysis, you need to name the assumption and show how to connects the pieces. Often an important key here is *naming* the assumption.

Provocative Quotations (at least 2)

Find provocative/evocative quotations to read and then lead class in discussion of their implications. A “provocative quotation” is one

- that stimulates thoughts beyond the text itself (e.g., raises questions or comments upon rhetoric, and/or aspects of society or human psychology and behavior)
- and/or that asserts something as a commonplace when, in fact, it is not “universally” agreed to as truth
- and/or seems to contradict some other assertion in the same text

(Asks, Says, Does): Consider the paragraph that contains your provocative passage, and do the following (you can do this technique for every paragraph and section of the text, but it is very time-consuming). For each paragraph of a well-written text, you should be able to write 3 statements:

1. A question-statement: you articulate the main question asked in the par. (**Asks**)
2. A says-statement: the main point in the par (the answer to its question) (**Says**)
3. A does-statement: what rhetorical functions does the par serve within the text as a whole (**Does**)

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21W.747 Rhetoric
Spring 2015

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.