

WRITING ESSENTIALS IN STYLE & COMPOSITION  
**Week 8: Persuasive Writing - Pathos**

Read the following speeches and consider these questions as you read:

- Does the speech appeal to, and affect, the emotions of the audience?
- What persuasive tools does the speaker use?
- Is one speech more effective than the others? Why?

*During the Civil War, 8,000 men died in the battle of Gettysburg. President Abraham Lincoln gave this address to honor and remember the fallen.*

**Reading 1: “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln**

**November 19, 1863; Gettysburg, Pennsylvania**

(source: <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm>)

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot consecrate – we cannot hallow – this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.



*On June 17th, 1940, France signed an armistice and withdrew from WWII, leaving Britain alone to fight against the Germans. The next day, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave this speech to the House of Commons. This is the closing paragraph.*

## **Reading 2: An Excerpt from “Their Finest Hour” by Winston Churchill**

### **House of Commons, 18th June 1940**

(source: <https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1940-the-finest-hour/their-finest-hour/>)

What General Weygand called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this Island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, "This was their finest hour."



*Prince Hal has become Henry V and is now attempting to take the French crown. The small English army has experienced some victory against the French, but now tired and worn will face a larger French army. In his famous St. Crispin's Day speech, this is King Henry V's response to the wish that the English had more men.*

## **Reading 3: St. Crispin's Day Speech, from Shakespeare's *Henry V***

(source: <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/henryv/henryv.4.3.html>)

\What's he that wishes so?  
My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin:  
If we are mark'd to die, we are enow  
To do our country loss; and if to live,  
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.  
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.  
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,  
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;  
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;  
Such outward things dwell not in my desires:  
But if it be a sin to covet honour,  
I am the most offending soul alive.  
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:

God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour  
As one man more, methinks, would share from me  
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!  
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,  
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,  
Let him depart; his passport shall be made  
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:  
We would not die in that man's company  
That fears his fellowship to die with us.  
This day is called the feast of Crispian:  
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,  
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,  
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.  
He that shall live this day, and see old age,  
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,  
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian:'  
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.  
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'  
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,  
But he'll remember with advantages  
What feats he did that day: then shall our names  
Familiar in his mouth as household words  
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,  
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,  
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.  
This story shall the good man teach his son;  
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,  
From this day to the ending of the world,  
But we in it shall be remember'd;  
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;  
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me  
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,  
This day shall gentle his condition:  
And gentlemen in England now a-bed  
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,  
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks  
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.



*For almost 20 years, Christian Abolitionist and member of the British Parliament, William Wilberforce fought to end the slave trade. This was the first speech he gave to the House of Commons, but it wasn't until 1807 that he finally succeeded and the Slave Trade Act was passed.*

#### **Reading 4: “Abolition Speech” by William Wilberforce**

**May 12, 1789, House of Commons, London**

(source: <https://www.artofmanliness.com/abolition-speech-by-william-wilberforce/>)

When I consider the magnitude of the subject which I am to bring before the House—a subject, in which the interests, not of this country, nor of Europe alone, but of the whole world, and of posterity, are involved: and when I think, at the same time, on the weakness of the advocate who has undertaken this great cause - when these reflections press upon my mind, it is impossible for me not to feel both terrified and concerned at my own inadequacy to such a task. But when I reflect, however, on the encouragement which I have had, through the whole course of a long and laborious examination of this question, and how much candour I have experienced, and how conviction has increased within my own mind, in proportion as I have advanced in my labours; - when I reflect, especially, that however averse any gentleman may now be, yet we shall all be of one opinion in the end; - when I turn myself to these thoughts, I take courage - I determine to forget all my other fears, and I march forward with a firmer step in the full assurance that my cause will bear me out, and that I shall be able to justify upon the clearest principles, every resolution in my hand, the avowed end of which is, the total abolition of the slave trade. I wish exceedingly, in the outset, to guard both myself and the House from entering into the subject with any sort of passion. It is not their passions I shall appeal to - I ask only for their cool and impartial reason; and I wish not to take them by surprise, but to deliberate, point by point, upon every part of this question. I mean not to accuse any one, but to take the shame upon myself, in common, indeed, with the whole parliament of Great Britain, for having suffered this horrid trade to be carried on under their authority. We are all guilty - we ought all to plead guilty, and not to exculpate ourselves by throwing the blame on others; and I therefore deprecate every kind of reflection against the various descriptions of people who are more immediately involved in this wretched business.

Having now disposed of the first part of this subject, I must speak of the transit of the slaves in the West Indies. This I confess, in my own opinion, is the most wretched part of the whole subject. So much misery condensed in so little room, is more than the human imagination had ever before conceived. I will not accuse the Liverpool merchants: I will allow them, nay, I will believe them to be men of humanity; and I will therefore believe, if it were not for the enormous magnitude and extent of the evil which distracts their attention from individual cases, and makes them think generally, and therefore less feelingly on the subject, they would never have persisted in the trade. I verily believe therefore, if the wretchedness of any one of the many hundred Negroes stowed in each ship could be brought before their view, and remain within the sight of the African Merchant, that there is no one among them whose heart would bear it. Let any one imagine to himself 6 or 700 of these wretches

chained two and two, surrounded with every object that is nauseous and disgusting, diseased, and struggling under every kind of wretchedness! How can we bear to think of such a scene as this? One would think it had been determined to heap upon them all the varieties of bodily pain, for the purpose of blunting the feelings of the mind ... In order, however, not to trust too much to any sort of description, I will call the attention of the House to one species of evidence which is absolutely infallible. Death, at least, is a sure ground of evidence, and the proportion of deaths will not only confirm, but if possible will even aggravate our suspicion of their misery in the transit. It will be found, upon an average of all the ships of which evidence has been given at the privy council, that exclusive of those who perish before they sail, not less than 12½ per cent. perish in the passage. Besides these, the Jamaica report tells you, that not less than 4½ per cent. die on shore before the day of sale, which is only a week or two from the time of landing. One third more die in the seasoning, and this in a country exactly like their own, where they are healthy and happy as some of the evidences would pretend. The diseases, however, which they contract on shipboard, the astringent washes which are to hide their wounds, and the mischievous tricks used to make them up for sale, are, as the Jamaica report says, one principal cause of this mortality. Upon the whole, however, here is a mortality of about 50 per cent. and this among negroes who are not bought unless (as the phrase is with cattle) they are sound in wind and limb. How then can the House refuse its belief to the multiplied testimonies before the privy council, of the savage treatment of the negroes in the middle passage? Nay, indeed, what need is there of any evidence? The number of deaths speaks for itself, and makes all such enquiry superfluous. As soon as ever I had arrived thus far in my investigation of the slave trade, I confess to you sir, so enormous so dreadful, so irremediable did its wickedness appear that my own mind was completely made up for the abolition. A trade founded in iniquity, and carried on as this was, must be abolished, let the policy be what it might, - let the consequences be what they would, I from this time determined that I would never rest till I had effected its abolition.



*Amidst conflicts with the US Army and discord within the tribe itself, Chief Joseph fought for peace. Joseph and the tribe of Nez Perce traveled to Canada, hoping for reprieve. After a treacherous journey and a five day battle, they surrendered just 40 miles away from the Canadian border.*

### **Reading 5: “Surrender Speech” by Chief Joseph**

**October 5, 1877; Montana Territory**

(source: <https://www.historyplace.com/speeches/joseph.htm>)

Tell General Howard I know his heart. What he told me before, I have it in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our Chiefs are killed; Looking Glass is dead, Ta Hool Hool Shute is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say yes or no. He who led on the young men is dead. It is cold, and we have no blankets; the little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run

away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are – perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my Chiefs! I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.



*Sparta fought against Athens in the Peloponnesian War. At the end of the first year, the Athenian leader Pericles gave this funeral oration.*

## **Reading 6: An excerpt from Pericles' Funeral Oration, from Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War***

**431 BC; Athens**

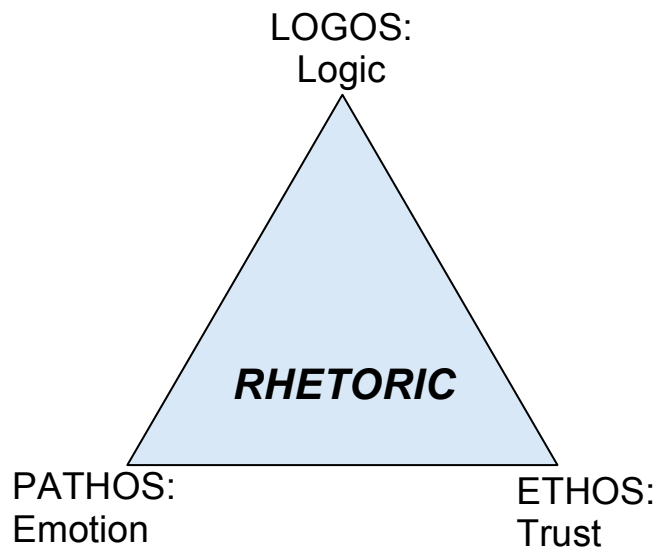
(source: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/education/thucydides.html>)

I have dwelt upon the greatness of Athens because I want to show you that we are contending for a higher prize than those who enjoy none of these privileges, and to establish by manifest proof the merit of these men whom I am now commemorating. Their loftiest praise has been already spoken. For in magnifying the city I have magnified them, and men like them whose virtues made her glorious. And of how few Hellenes can it be said as of them, that their deeds when weighed in the balance have been found equal to their fame! Methinks that a death such as theirs has been gives the true measure of a man's worth; it may be the first revelation of his virtues, but is at any rate their final seal. For even those who come short in other ways may justly plead the valour with which they have fought for their country; they have blotted out the evil with the good, and have benefited the state more by their public services than they have injured her by their private actions. None of these men were enervated by wealth or hesitated to resign the pleasures of life; none of them put off the evil day in the hope, natural to poverty, that a man, though poor, may one day become rich. But, deeming that the punishment of their enemies was sweeter than any of these things, and that they could fall in no nobler cause, they determined at the hazard of their lives to be honourably avenged, and to leave the rest. They resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness; but in the face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer, rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonour, but on the battle-field their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory.

Such was the end of these men; they were worthy of Athens, and the living need not desire to have a more heroic spirit, although they may pray for a less fatal issue. The value of such a spirit is not to be expressed in words. Anyone can discourse to you forever about the advantages of a brave defence, which you know already. But instead of listening to him I would have you day by day fix

your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it, who in the hour of conflict had the fear of dishonour always present to them, and who, if ever they failed in an enterprise, would not allow their virtues to be lost to their country, but freely gave their lives to her as the fairest offering which they could present at her feast. The sacrifice which they collectively made was individually repaid to them; for they received again each one for himself a praise which grows not old, and the noblest of all sepulchres--I speak not of that in which their remains are laid, but of that in which their glory survives, and is proclaimed always and on every fitting occasion both in word and deed. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men. Make them your examples, and, esteeming courage to be freedom and freedom to be happiness, do not weigh too nicely the perils of war. The unfortunate who has no hope of a change for the better has less reason to throw away his life than the prosperous who, if he survive, is always liable to a change for the worse, and to whom any accidental fall makes the most serious difference. To a man of spirit, cowardice and disaster coming together are far more bitter than death striking him unperceived at a time when he is full of courage and animated by the general hope..."

# Principles of Writing Persuasively: Pathos



Remember Aristotle's Rhetoric:

**1) Ethos:** the reader's impression of your character.

a) Good Sense or Experience

b) Upright Moral Character

c) Good Will towards the reader

**2) Pathos:** the reader's emotions about the matter.

**3) Logos:** proofs or demonstrations, either real, or apparent.

We are most convinced internally, when we are convinced that something has been proven. So proofs (*Logos*) are the most important. However, this week we will concentrate on the second principle: Pathos.

Emotions are natural forces which have more to do with our body than our intellect. Once we understand something and will (desire) it, the emotions can be of great assistance in carrying it out. They can push us to action. On the other hand, the emotions can also prevent us from acting in accordance with our intellect and will. Occasionally, they can even prevent us from understanding something properly, or making the choice to act in accordance with it.



# Assignment:

- Write a PERSUASIVE speech that you might give to a large audience. Use Logos, Pathos and Ethos, but focus primarily on Pathos to persuade. Appeal to the emotions.
- Write 700 - 1,000 of your own words.
- Choose a topic that is worthy of emotional involvement and that you are passionate about. Some examples:
  - A courtroom: the lawyer for the defendant (or perhaps even the defendant himself) tries to convince the jury of the defendant's innocence.
  - A courtroom: the prosecutor, who is trying to convict a defendant for perpetrating heinous crimes (murder, rape, arson).
  - A eulogy of the deceased at a funeral.
  - A politician in a parliament giving a speech to convince the members of the house to vote for or against a bill which would affect people's lives.
  - A clergyman trying to convince the congregation of the morality or immorality of an action, or the truth of a doctrine.
  - A commencement address: what would you say to the WISDOM graduates?
- Think of the speeches we read together, and what characteristics you would like to imitate in your own writing.
- Be sincere; persuade them about something that you are convinced is true. You are trying to convince them by using words and arguments that have an emotional effect.
- Choose emotionally charged words: avoid boring words, be bold. Use analogies and metaphors. Tell stories. Use humor or surprise (if appropriate to your topic). Use imagery. Give examples to strengthen your point. Play with tone and rhythm of words.
- Remember that a speech is very different from an essay. This will be SPOKEN. Here are a couple tips on approaching a speech as opposed to an essay:
  - Avoid overly complicated or extremely long sentences.
  - Play with the SOUND of words and the structure of sentences.
  - It is acceptable to reiterate or repeat points if strong emphasis is desired.
  - Read your speech ALOUD to see how the words sound and hear the overall flow.

# Invention:

Who are you? (*example: the mother of a victim of drunk driving*) \_\_\_\_\_

Who is your audience? (*example: a group of teenagers and their parents*) \_\_\_\_\_

How might you appeal and move this particular audience? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your thesis?

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\_\_\_\_\_

What are three ways to support your thesis?

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\_\_\_\_\_

What other persuasive tools can you use to convince your readers of your position? Take some time to look at the following tools and plan ways to use them in your speech.

Syllogisms, examples, analogies, comparisons, moving quotes, burning questions, stating the opposition and offering a reply, compelling stories, appealing to something higher and beyond ourselves, giving hope, referring to the future, making it personal for the audience, showing that it's personal to you, show that you're emotionally invested, that you care, use emotionally charged language, evoke curiosity, surprise, laughter, anger, pity, etc.

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