



## Rhetoric and Communication

### Overview:

This lesson will explain how effective writers and orators manage language in order to move others to action for the common good. By exploring principles of rhetoric and effective communication, the learners will see that they too can marshal words to effect change on contemporary issues they care about. **Duration:** Four Fifty-Minute Class Periods (Depending on class size, this lesson may require an additional fifty-minute class period to complete the speeches.)

### Standards:

**RL.11-12.10, RI.11-12.10.** Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**W.1-12.5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

**W.11-12.7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**W.11-12.8.** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

**W.11-12.10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**W.11-12.9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.



**SL.11-12.3.** Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

**SL.11-12.4.** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

**SL.11-12.1.** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**L.11-12.6.** Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**L.11-12.3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

**L.11-12.4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

**Objectives:**

- Identify rhetorical strategies present in an effective speech- (Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" Speech).
- Apply Aristotle's concepts of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* to write a persuasive speech.
- Research contemporary instances of social injustice.
- Recognize effective communication as a tool to bring about social change.



This lesson will require learners to identify interest in an area of an identified social injustice/social need which they will address through the planning, development, and carrying out of a Service Project.

**Materials:**

- Chart paper and markers
- DVD player or VCR
- Computer lab access with Internet availability
- Highlighters
- Self-stick notes
- Aristotle and Persuasion (**Handout One**)
- Persuasive Speech Assignment (**Handout Two**)
- Persuasive Speech Rubric (**Handout Three**)
- Reflective Log and Ranking (**Handout Four**)

**Instructional Procedure(s):***Anticipatory Set:*

*Prior to the lesson, the teacher will obtain a DVD or video copy of Martin Luther King, Jr. delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech. (**Teacher Note:** If the learners have access to a computer and Internet, there are numerous web sites that can also be accessed: [www.usconstitution.net/dream](http://www.usconstitution.net/dream); <http://www.holidays.net/mlk/speech.htm>, etc...Tell the learners that they will be exploring how successful communicators use language effectively to persuade others.*

1. Give each learner a self-stick note and ask them to recall what they might know about some of the strategies Dr. King employed during his speech that they consider "effective."
2. Show the video or have the learners go on-line to listen to/view the speech. After viewing the video or listening to the speech, assign the learners to small groups and ask them to share with others in their group what they listed as "effective".
3. Have each group summarize the responses of their group members on chart paper and prepare to report back to the whole group. Post chart paper around the room.



4. Tell the learners that they will next study classic elements of effective persuasion and that later they will use these elements to persuade each other.
5. Give the learners brief biographical information on Aristotle as well as definitions of rhetoric, persuasion, *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. (**Handout One.**)
6. Distribute text copies of "I Have a Dream".
7. Divide the learners into three groups. Tell them that one group is to begin to find and highlight examples of *ethos*; one group, *logos*; and one group, *pathos*.

### Class Period 2

1. Have the learners complete their highlighting assignment from the 1st class period, and then regroup the learners so that each small group has a member who had worked on each of the three concepts. Have groups finish highlighting the speeches so that they have identified examples of all three concepts. Finally, have each group report back to the whole group.
2. Distribute **Persuasive Speech Assignment** description (**Handout Two.**) This includes a suggested outline for major parts of the speech.
3. Ask the learners to quickly brainstorm and list several instances of contemporary social injustice that they have witnessed, heard about, or read about at the local, state, national, or global level. Encourage learners to recall the injustices that they identified in Lesson Two as a way to complete this task easily. (**Teacher Note:** Classroom participation in a *Newspapers in Education* program, which allows for delivery of copies of daily newspapers to the classroom free or at a nominal cost, is an excellent way to help the learners identify and understand contemporary social issues.)
4. Ask the learners to now narrow this list to one injustice that they personally feel most interested in addressing, then provide time in a media center or computer lab for them to research their chosen topic. (Teacher note: An assumption is that students at this level are familiar with basic research techniques, including Internet searches, assessing source credibility, note-taking, and citing sources using Modern Language Association (MLA) style. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>)
5. Allow the learners time to begin to develop their five-minute speech, circulating to guide them toward ideas and sources that will help them to generate a speech that establishes their own credibility (*ethos*), provides solid lines of argument (*logos*), appeals to the emotions of their audience (*pathos*). The learners should write a rough



6. draft of their speech and bring it to the next class period. Distribute the **Persuasive Speech Rubric. (Handout Three.)**

### Class Period 3

1. Ask the learners to conduct a peer review of a partner's rough draft. They should do this by reading their draft orally to a partner, who takes notes on the rubric. Partners then discuss areas of strength and weakness in the drafts.
2. Review with the whole class characteristics of effective oral delivery. Sample responses will include making eye contact, avoiding nervous gestures, speaking clearly, and making use of pauses. A learner can record class responses on the board or on a flip chart. Suggest that the learners visit one or more of the many websites related to speech-making, such as [www.speechtips.com](http://www.speechtips.com)
3. Conclude the class period in the media center to allow learners to revise, edit, and further consult source material as needed to finish a rough draft of their speech.
4. The learners should write a final draft of their speech, practice its delivery, and bring the final draft to the next class period.

### Class Period 4

1. Remind the learners that they will be expected to participate in one of three Academic Service Learning projects that the class will identify based upon the persuasive speeches they hear during this class period. Distribute a Reflective Log and Ranking (**Handout Four**) so that the learners can use it to record notes and impressions as they hear the speeches. This log will be used to help them identify the top three "injustices" that they, as a class, select to work on.
2. Have each learner deliver his/her speech. (Teacher note: Depending on class size, this step may take an additional class period to complete.)
3. Reserve time at the end of final class period for learners to complete their Reflective Log and Ranking (**Handout Four**) and compile the rankings to identify the top three social injustices that will be addressed in Lesson Five.
4. Tell the learners that they will now need to begin to think about which of these three social needs areas they would be most interested to participate in the actual planning and carrying out of a service project.



**Assessment:**

Using a rubric, the learners will be assessed on their persuasive speeches (**Handout Three**). Additional assessments include teacher observation of brainstorming exercise as well as peer reflection/assessment of the learner's oral speech presentation.

**School/Home Connection:**

Encourage the learner to ask family members about instances of social injustice they are aware of and if they might serve as an 'audience' so the learner could practice his/her practice delivery at home.

**Bibliographical References:**

Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream." 28 Aug. 1963, Washington, D.C. [www.usconstitution.net/dream](http://www.usconstitution.net/dream) ; <http://www.holidays.net/mlk/speech.htm> .

Videotape or DVD copy of "I Have a Dream" delivered by Martin Luther King, Jr. on 28 Aug. 1963, Washington, D.C. available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

A copy of the MLA (Modern Language Association) Style: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

Lesson Plan source from Susan Hall in Hart, MI for Hart Public Schools



**HANDOUT 1**

**Aristotle and Persuasion**

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**Aristotle** (384-322 BCE) was a Greek philosopher who studied under Plato. Aristotle studied and wrote prolifically on subjects from politics to metaphysics. Aristotle's discussion of **rhetoric** contributed lasting ideas about the methods of **persuasion**.

**Rhetoric** is the art of using language effectively and persuasively.

**Persuasion** is an appeal to an audience. *Ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* were identified by Aristotle as appeals necessary to effectively persuade an audience.

**Ethos** is the establishment of the credibility of the author or speaker. An author develops ethos by using objective and fair language, by considering counterarguments, and by presenting appropriate and credible sources.

**Logos** is an appeal to logic. An author develops logos by offering credible facts and statistics related to the topic at hand, by using allusion, by using deductive and inductive reasoning, and by citing credible sources outside the work itself.

**Pathos** is an appeal to the emotion of the audience. An author develops pathos by including figurative language such as metaphor, simile, and vivid imagery, by including emotional anecdotes, and by offering vivid, connotative language employed to evoke sympathy and emotional interest in the topic.



Handout 2

**Persuasive Speech Assignment**

**Persuasive Speech Assignment**

Your assignment is to craft and deliver a short (3-5 minutes) speech. Your goal is to persuade your classmates to join you in working to address a contemporary instance of social injustice. Later in this unit you will have an opportunity to develop with your group a Service Learning experience that addresses the injustice each group chooses.

The social injustice you choose to focus on may be:

- of local, state, national, or global origin,
- an isolated incident or part of a larger pattern.

The speech you compose should reflect your knowledge of the rhetorical strategies of effective persuasion:

- *ethos*
- *logos*
- *pathos*

as well as devices characteristic of good writing in general and speech-writing in particular, including but not limited to:

- repetition
- parallel structure
- active verbs

You must cite three credible outside sources during the text of your speech. Documentation should appear parenthetically in-text and on a final Works Cited page; required style is MLA.

**Suggested Outline for Persuasive Speech**

- Introduction: Greet and directly address your audience. Arouse their curiosity and attention with an anecdote, story, startling statistic or fact. Clearly state your theme. Give them a reason to listen.
- Body: Help your audience to visualize the social injustice you're discussing. Include your outside source references here. Reinforce your theme.
- Call to Action: Conclude your speech by inviting your audience to join you in addressing this injustice. Consider circling back to some element of your introduction. Recapture your main idea.

You will turn in a rough draft and a polished final draft. You will have the opportunity to receive and give peer feedback at the rough draft stage.

### Handout 3

#### Persuasive Speech Rubric

|                            | Exceeds Requirements (3)   | Meets Requirements (2)   | Does Not Meet Requirements (1)   |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Persuasive Appeal          | Powerful use of persuasive appeals; thoughtful and effective address of ethos, pathos, logos. Speech is very convincing. Language is carefully crafted.  | Appeals have been addressed. Speech may be slightly less convincing than the (3) level. Language is adequate but less polished than the (3) level. | One or more persuasive appeal overlooked. Language is unpolished in places.  |
| Oral Delivery              | Speaker makes use of eye contact, avoids nervous gestures, speaks clearly, and uses pauses effectively. Speaker uses body language and gestures to enhance the message. Speaker appears confident and comfortable. It is clear that the speaker has practiced. The speech is 4-6 minutes in length | Speaker uses eye contact and speaks clearly. Practice is evident. The speech is less than four minutes or more than six minutes in length.         | Delivery is unpracticed. There may be distracting body language and gestures, and little or no eye contact with audience. The speech is less than three minutes or more than seven minutes long. |
| Research and Documentation | Writer has cited more than three sources. Sources are of high credibility. MLA style is followed.  | Three credible sources are cited using MLA style.  | Fewer than three sources are cited; MLA may be incorrectly done; sources may be of lower quality.  |
| Written Final Draft        | Speech has been proofread. There are not mistakes in spelling, sentence structure, or mechanics. Final draft is set in a 12-point traditional font. There is a thoughtful title.   | Speech has been proofread; a few errors in sentence structure or mechanics may remain, although they are not frequent or distracting.              | There are several distracting mistakes in the areas of spelling, sentence structure, or mechanics.   |

**Handout 4**  
**Rhetoric and Communication**

**Reflective Log and Ranking**

Instructions: Take notes as you listen to your classmates' speeches. When all the speeches have been delivered, rank your interest from most to least (1= most interesting, etc.) in the proposed projects. In Lesson Five you will be asked to participate in one of the top three (based upon a compilation of the class ranking) proposed Service Projects.

| Speech giver<br>Name | Topic<br>Name | Notes | Rank (after all speeches have been delivered)<br>Assign a number: 1 = most interesting, 2= next most<br>interesting, etc.. |
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