

Modes of Discourse

DISCOURSE = Verbal Expression in Speech or Writing

Understand this: While many works of non-fiction writing make use of a dominant mode, in reality, almost every piece of writing contains a mix of the modes below.

Look at this example from a website about gourmet food—

All custards are soft, wiggly, rich and indulgent, yet each is delightfully unique and different. One might be refined and elegant, while another a nostalgic nod to childhood; one might be served warm and gooey and another frozen; one might be sweet and another savory. Interestingly, all custards are born of the same three ingredients: dairy, egg and sugar. What sets each apart is the method of cooking and ratio of ingredients.

Let's begin by understanding the role that each ingredient plays in the larger picture. Dairy can mean milk, cream or a combination of the two; sugar obviously serves to sweeten, but also acts as a tenderizer; and eggs are the primary structural ingredient in the custard. Whole eggs contain proteins that coagulate when gently introduced to heat and allow custards such as flan enough sturdiness to be unmolded.

The portion above in red relies on the mode of description. The portion in blue relies on exposition.



Mode

Key Elements of Structure

Narration

tells a story

Description

uses imagery to explain how something looks, sounds, feels, tastes, and/or smells

Argument

takes a position and defends it

Exposition

explains something, provides information

Sub-modes of **exposition** include:

Process (how something works)

Comparison/Contrast (how two things are alike or different)

Cause and Effect (how one thing leads to another)

Classification (how things are grouped together)

Definition (how things are defined or labeled)

Analysis (how elements fit together to form a whole)

Exemplification (how examples are used to support and clarify)

What is a RHETORICAL STRATEGY?

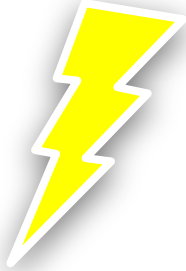
Anything that a
writer does
consciously can be
a rhetorical
strategy.

Your book refers to “**tropes**” and “**schemes.**”
These are broad terms that refer to many rhetorical strategies. Here are their definitions:

- Trope- a figure of speech; a word, phrase, expression, or image that is used in a figurative way, usually for rhetorical effect
- Scheme- artful syntax (sentence structure); creative arrangement of words



If you become
absolutely
stumped, write
about diction,
syntax, and tone.



Tropes

Diction-The use of words with significant connotations (what the word implies) or denotations (how the word would be defined in a dictionary)

Details- What the author chooses to include or leave out.

Imagery- language that evokes one or all of the five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching.

Metaphor and symbolism- Non-literal, imaginative substitutions in which, for instance, a tree becomes a metaphor for family, or springtime symbolizes rebirth

Metonymy- The use of a concrete image to represent a more abstract concept (such as the use of “the press” to represent journalists and the work they do)

Synecdoche- A figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole, the whole for a part, the specific for the general, the general for the specific, or the material for the thing made from it (If I say, “Use your head,” I’ve used synecdoche because I’m really telling you to use your brain, which is part of your head.)

Point of View/ Narrator- Usually first or third person. First person tends to be more subjective. Third person tends to be more objective. Sometimes, first, third, or even second person (you) is a significant strategy.

Analogy- The comparison of two pairs that have the same relationship. The key is to ascertain the relationship between the first so you can choose the correct second pair.

Hyperbole- Exaggeration or overstatement.

Personification- giving human qualities to non-human subjects

Allusion- An indirect reference to something (without directly stating it) real or fictional, to someone, some event, or something in the Bible, history, literature, or any phase of culture.

Irony (verbal)- An expression, often humorous or sarcastic, that expresses what is not expected, and often, the opposite of what is expected

Strategies that have to do with artful arrangement of words:

Conscious choices in syntax: variations in sentence complexity and length

Juxtaposition: Placement of two ideas or words closely together to emphasize comparison. These are general contrasts not necessarily opposing each other. They do not have to be in the same sentence.

Ex: Beauty catches the attention, but character catches the heart.

Antithesis: Placement of opposing ideas in a **parallel construction** for the purpose of emphasis. It is a direct contrast of two opposite ideas, words, or things usually in a single sentence.

Ex: That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.--Neil Armstrong

Schemes

PARALLELISM - A general category of syntactic patterns, parallelism is the:

-Repetition of similar grammatical constructions in successive clauses/sentences.

The winds all feel it and know it and tell it. – J. Muir

Specific forms of parallelism and syntactic patterns:

ANADIPLOSIS [AN uh di PLO sis]

-Using the word (s) from the end of one clause/sentence to start the next:

Things were tough all over, but it was better that way. That way you could tell the other guy was human too. – S.E. Hinton

ANAPHORA [uh NAF or uh]

-Using the same word (s) at beginning of successive (in a row) clauses/sentences:

He could feel the dark air like water; he could feel the dew under his feet.—W.Faulkner

EPISTROPHE [uh PIS tro fee]

-Using the same word (s) at the end of successive clauses/sentence:

The wagon has not stopped: time has not stopped. – W. Faulkner

ISOCOLON [ICE uh colon]

-Precisely parallel structures (same number, types, and pattern of words in each phrase/clause):

Every nation has its own traditions, its own values, its own aspirations. – J. Kennedy

CHIASMUS [ky AZ mus]

-Inverting the second of two parallel phrases:

Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind. –J. Kennedy



Writers often refer heavily on the **Aristotelian Appeals.**

Logos

Appeals to the head using logic, numbers, explanations, and facts. Through Logos, a writer aims at a person's intellect. The idea is that if you are logical, you will understand.

Ethos

Appeals to the conscience, ethics, morals, standards, values, principles. Often based on the credibility or qualifications of the speaker/writer.

Pathos

Appeals to the heart, emotions, sympathy, passions, sentimentality