

The Three Appeals of Argument

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

Ethical Appeal (*ethos*)

Emotional Appeal (*pathos*)

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

A logical appeal is one that appeals to the mind.

A logical appeal is the strategic use of claim, evidence, and warrant to convince an audience to do or believe something.

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

A claim is the notion the author wants to become reality—the author wants the reader/listener to do or believe something.

Example:

Claim—my parents should buy me a car

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

Evidence is support for the notion—facts, statistics, authoritative testimony, interview, observation, which are undisputable.

Example:

Evidence—driving me to and from school activities requires an average of three hours per week

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

A warrant makes a logical connection between a claim and the evidence.

Example: Buying me a car will save my parents a precious commodity, time—several hours per week

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

Claim—my parents should buy me a car

Evidence—driving me to and from school activities requires an average of three hours per week

Warrant--Buying me a car will save my parents a precious commodity, time—several hours per week

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

A claim is the notion the author wants to become reality—the author wants the reader/listener to do or believe something.

Example:

Claim—School should start at 9:00 AM, not 8:20 AM

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

Evidence is support for the notion—facts, which are undisputable.

Example:

Evidence—studies show that students who get even an hour more sleep per day do better in school

Logical Appeal (*logos*)

The three parts of a logical appeal: claim, evidence, warrant

A warrant makes a logical connection between a claim and the evidence.

Example: Starting school later, with students who are more rested, will improve student learning

When used correctly, logical appeal contains the following elements...

Strong, clear claims

Strong evidence (facts, statistics, personal experience, expert authority, interviews, observations, anecdotes)

Warrants that clearly connect evidence to claim

When used poorly, logical appeals may include...

Over-generalized claims

Reasons that are not fully explained or supported

Logical fallacies

Evidence misused or ignored

No recognition of opposing views

Ethical Appeal (*ethos*)

Ethical appeal is used to establish the writer as fair, open-minded, community minded, moral, honest. The writer creates a sense of him or herself as trustworthy, honorable, and credible.

Ethical Appeal (*ethos*)

Example:

Claim: we should make health insurance available to all people under 21.

Ethical appeal: children are the vulnerable in our society; we have a moral obligation to protect them.

Ethical Appeal (*ethos*)

Example:

Claim: women should be required to sign up for the selective service as men are required to do

Ethical appeal: both men and women have an interest in keeping the country safe

When used correctly, the writer is seen as...

Well-informed about the topic

Confident in his or her position

Sincere and honest

Understanding of the reader's concerns and possible objections

Humane and considerate

When used incorrectly, the writer can be viewed as...

Unfair or dishonest

Distorting or misrepresenting information (biased)

Insulting or dismissive of other viewpoints

Advocating intolerant ideas

Emotional Appeal (*pathos*)

Emotional appeals target the emotions of the reader to create some kind of connection with the writer and his or her claim.

Since humans are in many ways emotional creatures, pathos can be a very powerful strategy in argument.

However, emotional appeals can be transparently manipulative.

Emotional Appeal (*pathos*)

Example:

Claim: you should buy a Corvette.

Emotional appeal: A Corvette is a sexy, sleek, powerful car that will increase your worth in the eyes of the babes.

Emotional Appeal (*pathos*)

Example:

Claim: we should get out of school in early May

Emotional appeal: early May is the happy time of the year when the birds return and the flowers bloom

When done well, emotional appeals...

Reinforce logical arguments

Use diction and imagery to create a bond with the reader in a human way

Appeal to idealism, beauty, humor, nostalgia, or pity (or other emotions) in a balanced way

Are presented in a fair manner

When used improperly, emotional appeals...

Become a substitute for logic and reason (TV and magazine advertising often relies heavily on emotional rather than logical appeal)

Uses stereotypes to pit one group of people against another (propaganda and some political advertising does this)

Offers a simple, unthinking reaction to a complex problem

Takes advantage of emotions to manipulate (through fear, hate, pity, prejudice, embarrassment, lust, or other feelings) rather than convince credibly