

PERSUASIVE NONFICTION NOTES

Pg. 247

Looking Ahead

Nonfiction—writing about real people, events, and ideas—includes autobiographies, memoirs, biographies, diaries, letters, essays, news articles, and speeches. Through reading nonfiction, we find others who share our experiences, feelings, passions, and values. Our ideas, ideals, and causes are articulated and defended by the nonfiction writer.

Each part in Unit Two focuses on a Big Idea that can help you connect to the literary works.

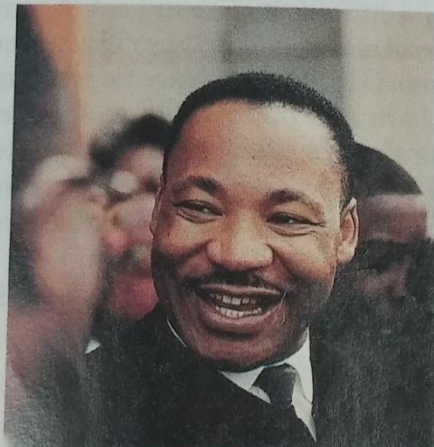
Pg. 249

Logic and Persuasion

Writing to Persuade

Persuasive essays and articles promote an opinion. They try to change the way readers think about subjects ranging from letter writing to space travel. **Speeches** are often persuasive, given to encourage a certain behavior or to win the listener over to a cause.

One type of persuasion is **argument**, which relies on logic, reason, and evidence to convince the reader of the truth of a claim. The evidence may consist of examples, facts, and opinions; it may also consist of various kinds of appeals. This excerpt from King's speech contains sarcasm, which is a type of emotional appeal.



Secondly, let us keep the issues where they are. The issue is injustice. The issue is the refusal of Memphis to be fair and honest in its dealings with its public servants, who happen to be sanitation workers. Now, we've got to keep attention on that. That's always the problem with a little violence. You know what happened the other day, and the press dealt only with the window-breaking. I read the articles. They very seldom got around to mentioning the fact that one thousand, three hundred sanitation workers were on strike, and that Memphis is not being fair to them, and that Mayor Loeb is in dire need of a doctor. They didn't get around to that.

—Martin Luther King Jr., from "I've Been to the Mountaintop" ★

LOG
ON



Literature Online

Literature and Reading For more selections in this genre, go to glencoe.com and enter QuickPass code GL57805u2.

Guide to Reading Nonfiction

- When reading nonfiction, first determine what type of work you are reading.
- Try to identify the author's purpose. Is he or she writing to explain, to inform, to entertain, or to persuade?
- If the author's purpose is to inform or explain, look for a thesis statement and support for the thesis.
- If the author's purpose is to entertain, look for literary elements, such as figurative language, dialogue, and suspense.
- If the author's purpose is to persuade, determine whether the author is presenting an argument, emotional appeals, or a combination of both.

LOG
ON

Literature Online

Unit Resources For additional skills practice, go to glencoe.com and enter QuickPass code GL57805u2.

Types of Nonfiction

- **Literary nonfiction** includes writing about literature and about real people and events.
- An **autobiography** tells the story of the writer's life.
- A **memoir** tells about an event or period in the writer's life.
- A **biography** tells the story of another person's life.
- An **essay** is a short work of nonfiction on a single topic. An essay can be **formal** or **informal**.
- Informal, or **personal**, essays are meant primarily to entertain. Formal essays may be intended to explain or persuade.
- **Persuasive** essays and speeches are intended to change the way people act and think. Argument persuades through logic, reason, and evidence.

LOGIC AND PERSUASION

What makes a message convincing?

Authors use logic and persuasive techniques to convince an audience to think, act, or exercise their freedom in a particular way. In the quotation below from "On Women's Right to Vote," note how Susan B. Anthony makes her point about giving women the right to vote.

Persuasion

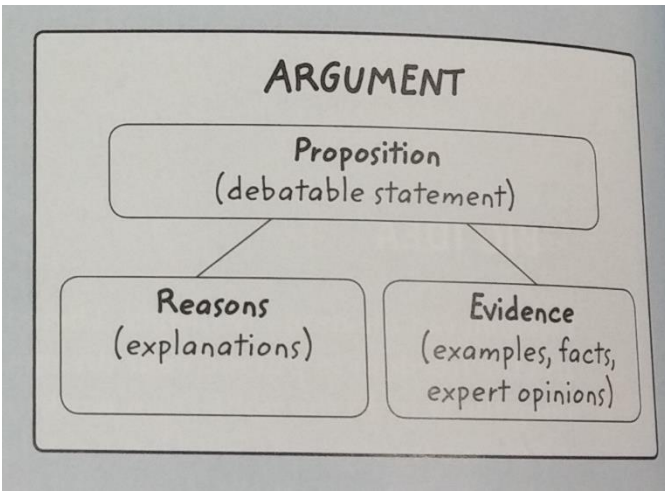
Persuasion is a type of speech or writing, usually nonfiction, that attempts to convince an audience to think or act in a particular way. Creators of persuasive works use various techniques to sway readers, but all persuasion shares one element: the argument.

Argument In persuasion, an **argument** is a statement of opinion about a problem or an issue and the support for the statement. The statement is called the **proposition**. The propo-

sition is usually in the form of a declarative sentence. Anthony's proposition begins "And it is downright . . ." You might have phrased it like this: *Women cannot truly enjoy their rights if they are denied the only way to secure them: by voting.* A good proposition should be debatable. In other words, it must be possible to present support for or against it.

Support The **support** for an argument includes reasons and evidence. **Reasons** explain why someone should accept the proposition. **Evidence** consists of examples, facts, and expert opinions. Strong arguments often include a **counterargument**, a brief argument that attempts to disprove opposing opinions about the problem or issue.

Graphic from pg. 362



Pg. 363

Logic is a method used to structure clear and effective arguments. The strongest arguments are based on sound reasoning, or logical thinking. An argument may be structured logically by using either inductive or deductive reasoning.

Inductive reasoning involves drawing a general conclusion from specific facts: *All people, white and non-white, male and female, built the Union. It was formed to secure rights for all people, not half of them. So, all people in the Union should have the same rights.*

Deductive reasoning involves drawing a specific conclusion from general and specific facts: *"The people" includes women and men, white and non-white, citizen and non-citizen. The Union was built by those people to secure their rights, which include voting rights. So, all people in the Union should be granted the right to vote.*

Persuasive Techniques

Most arguments make use of persuasive techniques known as appeals, including appeals to logic, emotion, ethics, and authority. Examine the appeals in these examples from the rest of Anthony's speech.

An **appeal to logic** presents facts and logical thinking, or reasoning, in support of a proposition.

For any state to make sex a qualification that must ever result in the disfranchisement of one entire half of the people is to pass a bill of attainder, or an *ex post facto* law, and is therefore a violation of the supreme law of the land.

An **appeal to emotion** attempts to stir up positive or negative feelings in the audience.

It is an odious aristocracy: a hateful oligarchy of sex; the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe;

An **appeal to ethics** draws upon shared values and beliefs within the intended audience.

An **appeal to authority** is based on the testimony of a source widely regarded as expert or reliable.

Rhetorical Devices

Persuasive techniques may also include **rhetorical devices**, which use language to enhance persuasion. One of the most common rhetorical devices is parallelism. **Parallelism** is the repetition of words, phrases, or sentences that have the same grammatical form. Anthony uses this device, as seen in the example from her essay below.

To them this government has no just powers derived from the consent of the governed. To them this government is not a democracy.