

[Day 1-Wednesday, Sub-work] On a separate sheet of paper copy the following notes and answer the questions. The questions for each classes will be added together until the unit is complete.

Introducing Exigence

= an urgent need that calls for a response

Essential Questions:

- What does exigence mean?
- What rhetorical role does it play?
- How does it relate to rhetorical writing?

Learning Goals:

- Infer exigence from article introductions
- Articulate an exigence in their own introductions

-----end of notes

Activity 1: Quick write (1 paragraph):

QUESTION #1 Describe a time recently when you felt you had to share your opinion about something.

- What prompted you to do so?
- Was it some event, some problem you noticed?
- Did someone ask you to respond?

Activity 2: Comparing Opening Lines

QUESTION #2 Consider the following two opening sentences for an essay. Explain and write down which one intrigues you more? Why?

A. When I had to choose a topic to write about, I chose gender roles. There have always been differences in the ways that men and women were supposed to act and the ways that they were supposed to act with each other.

B. The other day, a friend asked me what I thought of the #metoo movement, and I realized that I didn't really know. While I appreciate that it has raised awareness among boys and men about the ways they treat women, I wonder what it means for women and men in terms of how we should behave together and how it's OK to express interest in each other.

QUESTION #3 What can you tell from these openings about what motivated the writer to write the essay that will follow?

Activity 3: Exploring Key Concepts

Read the following brief discussion of rhetorical exigence and its relationship to the concepts of rhetorical situation you have been studying.

Exigence

In the second half of the twentieth century, the philosopher Lloyd Bitzer wrote an article in which he considers what makes speech or writing rhetorical. He suggests that discourse is rhetorical because it is embedded in a rhetorical situation—a situation marked by an exigence, in which a rhetor tries to modify the exigence by recruiting the audience to action through speech or writing. He defines exigence as “an imperfection marked by urgency,” by which he means it is a problem to be solved that must be solved at that moment. He suggests, then, that something has happened that motivates the rhetor to respond and shapes the rhetor’s response.

Critics of Bitzer’s note that people are creative and do not merely respond to the world but define the world that they find, including the situation and whatever urgency they might see in that situation. Consider the following scenario: a student gets back an essay with a low grade and makes an appointment to speak with the teacher about it. When the student begins the conversation, she can begin in any of the following ways (or many others) [\[do not answer questions\]](#):

- Why did you give me a bad grade on this essay?
- I’m worried that my grade on this essay may hurt my class grade and my chances to get into a good college. What can I do to raise my grade?
- Could we take some time to go over your feedback on this essay, so I can use this opportunity to learn to write better?

In each case, the same event has occurred, but its meaning and what is at issue about the situation has changed.

Some questions then, when considering exigence, are as follows [\[do not answer\]](#):

1. What happened? Or what’s the issue/topic?
2. What matters about what happened? Or what is at issue?
3. Why does this matter now (or at whatever time the discourse was produced)?

Note that while this focuses on the rhetor’s motivation for speaking or writing, it differs from purpose. The rhetor’s purpose is to encourage an audience to some kind of action. That

purpose should in some way help to respond to the exigence that urged the rhetor to write or speak in the first place.

Suppose, for instance, you notice that recently, trash has begun to pile up in the school hallways. The issue that prompts you to respond—or exigence—is the increasing litter. You could respond to different audiences to request help in resolving this issue, and you might have different purposes with each audience. For instance, you could write to the principal to work with the janitors to ensure that the trash gets cleaned up—your purpose being to encourage the principal to do so. You could write a letter to your school newspaper asking your schoolmates to throw their trash away in trash cans, so we have less litter. The exigence—what prompted you to respond—is the same in both cases, but you have different purposes in writing to those different audiences.

QUESTION #4 Look back at the discussion you had in Activity 2. Describe the exigence in each of the essay openings and your reasoning.

[Day 2-Thursday, Sub-work] Activity 4: Considering the Rhetorical Situation

To take the idea of exigence beyond the classroom, you will explore the two editorials (**text packets on front desk next to projector**), from 2014, about then-President Obama’s decision to delay an executive order on immigration. Work in pairs to read these editorials, annotate main ideas, and discuss what the introductions reveal about the exigence of each of the editorials.

QUESTION #5 What event does each editorial respond to?

QUESTION #6 What matters about what happened? Or what is at issue?

QUESTION #7 Why does this matter now (or at whatever time the discourse was produced)?

QUESTION #8 The Los Angeles Times has a center-left editorial board to speak to a somewhat liberal audience and the Wall Street Journal has a center-right editorial board to speak to a somewhat conservative audience, considering these details, why would the contrasting perspectives from the two articles appeal to those particular audiences?

[Day 3-Friday, Sub-work] Activity 6: Considering Your Task and Your Rhetorical Situation

Now that you have worked together to analyze the prior editorials, you are ready to do individual analyses of two additional opinion pieces (**last two readings in packet**). For each of

the two editorials, write a paragraph explaining **a.)** the exigence (urgent need calling for a response) of the articles, **b.)** the audience that exigence implies, and **c.)** your reasoning for that analysis.

Once you have completed your analyses, **d.)** write a few sentences establishing an issue that you see as important right now and making clear to readers why it matters.

QUESTION #9 Write a paragraph analyses using the above requirements for the *Washington Post* article

QUESTION #10 Write a paragraph analyses using the above requirements for the editorial by Dan Gainor

[Day 4-Monday, Sub-work] Activity 7: Developing a Position

Think of some situation that you have noticed in the world now that needs attention (whether that world is your school, your neighborhood, your town, or a larger community). Brainstorm details of the issue—consider how the issue came to your attention, what specifically strikes you as important about it, and how you will convince others that the issue matters. In order to do so, you may have to look at local (or school) newspapers online or do research (**with cell phone in class**) on state or national statistics that illuminate what is at issue about whatever topic you describe.

QUESTION #11 For this question response, create an opening sentence for your own issue (article). Use the opening sentences as examples from the text to help you.

Activity 9: Analyzing your Draft Rhetorically

Exchange your opening sentences with a partner. Each of you should read the other’s opening lines and describe what you see as the exigence defined by the author. If, as authors, you don’t think you have communicated what you intended as the exigence, discuss what you had hoped to achieve and get suggestions for revision.

QUESTION #12 Write a 1-Page Editorial on the topic of your choice (you will have this class period and the next class period to finish)

[Day 5-Tuesday, Sub-work] Continue writing a 1-Page Editorial on the topic of your choice

Before the end of class, answer the following questions for reflection:

QUESTION #13 What does exigence mean in your own words?

QUESTION #14 What rhetorical role does it play?

QUESTION #15 How will you make use of the concept of exigence in your own future writing?

[Day 6-Wednesday, Sub-work] Bored and Brilliant [NEW UNIT] On a separate sheet of paper copy the following notes and answer the questions

The purpose of this module is to establish an awareness of the impact smartphones have on us and provide practical ways of controlling and balancing our use of smartphones, time, and energy. It also addresses multiple genres of reading and writing tasks students should become more familiar with in order to navigate the varied expectations in both academic and professional situations (PARAPHRASE THIS NOTE)

Essential Questions:

What is the impact of smartphones in our lives?

How can we control the use of our smartphones to improve the quality of our lives?

Learning Goals:

- Understand the value and importance of creativity
- Identify central arguments from a variety of texts
- Explain multiple perspectives on a controversial topic
- Write and present an argumentative epideictic speech
- Illustrate data using a data organizer (infographic)

Rhetorical Concepts:

Epideictic speeches, which come from Aristotle's three kinds of rhetoric, serve different purposes: deliberative/political rhetoric; forensic/judicial rhetoric; epideictic/ceremonial rhetoric. Epideictic discourse concerns itself with blame or praise of something in the present. It confirms or critiques values and beliefs held in society.

Activity 2: Getting Ready to Read—Primary Source Analysis Purpose:

The painting (see on next page) "A Bloomsbury Family" by William Orpen, 1907, offers a perspective of lifestyle in 1918. Look at this painting for a few minutes and consider how it may or may not reflect your lifestyle today. Answer the following questions under your notes

QUESTION #1 What expressions do you notice?

QUESTION #2 What does the painting focus on?

QUESTION #3 What might a typical day look like for this family?

QUESTION #4 What feelings does the painting evoke?

QUESTION #5 List any questions you may have.

QUESTION #6 Provide the painting with an alternative title.



A Bloomsbury Family by William Orpen,

[Day 7-Thursday, Sub-work] Final Day with Sub

Activity 3: Getting Ready to Read – Bored and Brilliant Survey

The following are questions that will help you understand yourself and how you use your devices. The answers will give a better picture of your digital habits and show what information and tips will best help you find equilibrium. Write out only the answer you selected for your response in a complete sentence. Explain your answers. Do not write out the question or alternate answer choices.

For example, on the next question, if I general keep my phone in my pocket—my response would be: *I generally keep my phone in my pocket so I know it's on me.*

QUESTION #7 Where do you generally keep your phone?

- a. On my desk
- b. In my pocket
- c. In my bag
- d. Other (please specify)

QUESTION #8 Overall, I think I spend _____ on my phone each day:

- a. Way too much time
- b. Too much time
- c. Just the right amount of time
- d. Not enough time
- e. No time

QUESTION #9 What are the top three apps that you open most frequently? Please rank each of these 1, 2, or 3. Feel free to enter a response you don't see listed below.

- a. Phone calls
- b. E-mail
- c. Texting
- d. Navigation
- e. Social media
- f. Camera
- g. Games
- h. Other (please specify): _____
- i. N/A

QUESTION #10 Part of this project is about rethinking where your phone and computer fit into your life. Which behaviors are you most interested in cutting down?

- a. Checking/opening
- b. Game playing
- c. Texting
- d. Talking
- e. Photo taking
- f. Social media usage
- g. Overall time spent
- h. Other (please specify): _____
- i. None

Explain the answer(s):

QUESTION #11 Is there a time of day when you most want/need to change your phone-or computer-usage habits?

- a. Early morning (5 am-9 am)
- b. Morning (9 am-12 pm)
- c. Lunchtime (12 pm-2 pm)
- d. Late afternoon (2 pm-5 pm)
- e. Evening (5pm - 8pm)
- f. Night (9 pm - 12 am)
- g. Late night (12 am - 4 am)
- h. During class
- i. Weekends
- j. All of the above
- k. None of the above
- l. N/A

Explain the answer(s):

QUESTION #12 Thinking about your overall stress level, please indicate how your phone or computer (or both) fit in:

- m. Adds stress to my life
- n. Alleviates stress in my life
- o. Does not contribute to my stress level
- p. N/A

Explain the answer:

QUESTION #13 In the past week, thinking about the personal and academic projects and ideas in front of you, have you had enough time to sit and think?

- q. I have had more than enough time to sit and think
- r. I have had just enough time to sit and think
- s. I have not had enough time to sit and think
- t. N/A

Explain the answer:

Activity 4: Exploring Key Concepts – Cubing Activity

The following activity will help you learn and remember important concepts and **vocabulary** related to this topic. It applies effective brain-based learning techniques which engage the mind in a variety of methods.

Take a blank piece of notebook paper and fold it in half four times, creating eight four divided squares on the two sides of the paper. In one corner, write the word **boredom** along with the definition. In another square draw an image of the word. In the next square, use the word in context in a sentence, and in the last square provide examples of what boredom isn't or antonyms of the word.

Do this on the other side for the words: **creativity, curiosity, depression, anxiety, and innovation**. **You should have a total of 6 words**

Word + Definition	Image
Original Sentence (in context)	Antonyms (or what it isn't)