

## Rhetorical Terms/Flashcards

Due Date: First Day of School

Tested: Yes, First Week of school (depends on schedule). Your teacher will clarify the date at the start of school, but you need to start memorizing now.

The purpose of this assignment is to help you develop a strong familiarity with rhetorical terms that we will use throughout the year. Flashcards can help you study for and memorize the following terms. You should make them ASAP and study them every day. To motivate you to do this, you will be KEEP A LOG of how often you look at your flashcards. You should take them with you wherever you go: in Hawaii? take selfie with you and your cards and then log it; running with the bulls in Pamplona? get a photographer to capture you jumping over the wall with your flashcards in hand, and then log it; lazing by the sea studying your cards?, log it.

Here is what your log should look like:

#	DATE	Amount of time studying cards and WITNESS? Other pertinent facts about the session

Make sure someone signs off on your studying. **Bring this to school the first day.**

Flashcards rules:

- on 3x5 cards.
- Term written neatly on the front.
- Definitions written neatly on the back.
- Do not cut and paste from this handout—that defeats the purpose of learning the terms. The actual manual writing of the terms makes connections in your brain – writing them is your first round of memorizing the terms.
- Do NOT be that person who makes their flashcards all weird and crazy (e.g. – no decorations with flowers, unnecessary markings)
- It is up to you but looking up examples of the rhetorical terms could prove useful for seeing usage, application, and context of the words. You could put these examples on your flashcards if you choose.

The Words you are expected to know the first day you walk into class are as follows:

1. **Absolute**—a word free from limitations or qualifications (“best,” “all”, “unique,” “perfect”).
2. **Ad hominem argument**—an argument attacking an individual’s character rather than his or her position on an issue.
3. **Allusion**—a reference to something literary, mythological, or historical that the author assumes the reader will recognize.

4. **Analogy**—a comparison of two different things that are similar in some way.
5. **Anaphora**—repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginning of successive clauses (Example from the great Richard D. Bury: “In books I find the dead as if they were alive; in books I foresee things to come; in books warlike affairs are set forth; from books come forth the laws of peace.”)
6. **Anecdote**—a brief narrative that focuses on a particular incident or event
7. **Antecedent**—the word, phrase, or clause to which a pronoun refers
8. **Antithesis**—a statement in which two opposing ideas are balanced
9. **Aphorism**—a concise, statement that expresses succinctly a general truth or idea, often using rhyme or balance
10. **Asyndeton**—a construction in which elements are presented in a series without conjunctions (“They spent the day wondering, searching, thinking, understanding.”)
11. **Balanced sentence**—a sentence in which words, phrases, or clauses are set off against each other to emphasize a contrast (George Orwell: “If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.”)
12. **Chiasmus**—a statement consisting of two parallel parts in which the second part is structurally reversed (“Susan walked in, and out rushed Mary.”)
13. **Cliché**—an expression that has been overused to the extent that its freshness has worn off (“the time of my life”, “at the drop of a hat”, etc.)
14. **Climax**—generally, the arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of increasing importance, often in parallel structure (“The concerto was applauded at the house of Baron von Schnooty, it was praised highly at court, it was voted best concerto of the year by the Academy, it was considered by Mozart the highlight of his career, and it has become known today as the best concerto in the world.”)
15. **Colloquialism**—informal words or expressions not usually acceptable in formal writing
16. **Complex sentence**—a sentence with one independent clause and at least one dependent clause
17. **Compound sentence**—a sentence with two or more coordinate independent clauses, often joined by one or more conjunctions
18. **Compound-complex sentence**—a sentence with two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses
19. **Concrete details**—details that relate to or describe actual, specific things or events
20. **Connotation**—the implied or associative meaning of a word (slender vs. skinny; cheap vs. thrifty)
21. **Cumulative sentence (loose sentence)**—a sentence in which the main independent clause is elaborated by the successive addition of modifying clauses or phrases (Jonathan Swift, A Modest Proposal: “I have been assured by a very knowing American friend of my acquaintance in London, that

a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.”)

22. **Declarative sentence**—a sentence that makes a statement or declaration

23. **Deductive reasoning**—reasoning in which a conclusion is reached by stating a general principle and then applying that principle to a specific case (The sun rises every morning; therefore, the sun will rise on Tuesday morning.)

24. **Denotation**—the literal meaning of a word

25. **Dialect**—a variety of speech characterized by its own particular grammar or pronunciation, often associated with a particular geographical region (“Y’all” = Southern dialect)

26. **Diction**—the word choices made by a writer (diction can be described as formal, semi-formal, ornate, informal, technical, etc.)

27. **Didactic**—having the primary purpose of teaching or instructing

28. **Ellipsis**—the omission of a word or phrase which is grammatically necessary but can be deduced from the context (“Some people prefer cats; others, dogs.”)

29. **Epigram**—a brief, pithy, and often paradoxical saying

30. **Ethos**—the persuasive appeal of one’s character, or credibility

31. **Euphemism**—an indirect, less offensive way of saying something that is considered unpleasant

32. **Exclamatory sentence**—a sentence expressing strong feeling, usually punctuated with an exclamation mark

33. **Figurative language**—language employing one or more figures of speech (simile, metaphor, imagery, etc.)

34. **Hyperbole**—intentional exaggeration to create an effect

35. **Idiom**—an expression in a given language that cannot be understood from the literal meaning of the words in the expression; or, a regional speech or dialect (“fly on the wall”, “cut to the chase”, etc.)

36. **Imagery**—the use of figures of speech to create vivid images that appeal to one of the senses

37. **Imperative sentence**—a sentence that gives a command

38. **Implication**—a suggestion an author or speaker makes (implies) without stating it directly. NOTE: the author/speaker implies; the reader/audience infers.

39. **Inductive reasoning**—deriving general principles from particular facts or instances (“Every cat I have ever seen has four legs; cats are four-legged animals.”)

40. **Inference**—a conclusion based on premises or evidence

41. **Interrogative sentence**—a sentence that asks a question
42. **Invective**—an intensely vehement, highly emotional verbal attack
43. **Inverted syntax**—a sentence constructed so that the predicate comes before the subject (ex: In the woods I am walking.)
44. **Irony**—the use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning; or, incongruity between what is expected and what actually occurs (situational, verbal, dramatic)
45. **Jargon**—the specialized language or vocabulary of a particular group or profession
46. **Juxtaposition**—placing two elements side by side to present a comparison or contrast
47. **Litotes**—a type of understatement in which an idea is expressed by negating its opposite (describing a particularly horrific scene by saying, “It was not a pretty picture.”)
48. **Logos**—appeal to reason or logic
49. **Malapropism**—the mistaken substitution of one word for another word that sounds similar (“The doctor wrote a subscription.”)
50. **Maxim**—a concise statement, often offering advice; an adage
51. **Metaphor**—a direct comparison of two different things
52. **Metonymy**—substituting the name of one object for another object closely associated with it (“The pen [writing] is mightier than the sword [war/fighting].”)
53. **Mood**—the emotional atmosphere of a work
54. **Motif**—a standard theme, element, or dramatic situation that recurs in various works
55. **Non sequitur**—an inference that does not follow logically from the premises (literally, “does not follow”)
56. **Paradox**—an apparently contradictory statement that actually contains some truth (“Whoever loses his life, shall find it.”)
57. **Parallelism**—the use of corresponding grammatical or syntactical forms
58. **Parody**—a humorous imitation of a serious work (Weird Al Yankovich’s songs, and the Scary Movie series are examples)
59. **Parenthetical**—a comment that interrupts the immediate subject, often to qualify or explain
60. **Pathos**—the quality in a work that prompts the reader to feel pity
61. **Pedantic**—characterized by an excessive display of learning or scholarship
62. **Personification**—endowing non-human objects or creatures with human qualities or characteristics
63. **Philippic**—a strong verbal denunciation. The term comes from the orations of Demosthenes against Philip of Macedonia in the fourth century.

64. **Polysyndeton**—the use, for rhetorical effect, of more conjunctions than is necessary or natural (John Henry Newman: “And to set forth the right standard, and to train according to it, and to help forward all students towards it according to their various capacities, this I conceive to be the business of a University.”)
65. **Rhetoric**—the art of presenting ideas in a clear, effective, and persuasive manner
66. **Rhetorical question**—a question asked merely for rhetorical effect and not requiring an answer
67. **Rhetorical devices**—literary techniques used to heighten the effectiveness of expression
68. **Sarcasm**—harsh, cutting language or tone intended to ridicule
69. **Satire**—the use of humor to emphasize human weaknesses or imperfections in social institutions (Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, *The Simpsons*, etc.)
70. **Scheme**—an artful deviation from the ordinary arrangement of words (anaphora, anastrophe, antithesis are some examples of schemes)
71. **Simile**—a comparison of two things using “like,” “as,” or other specifically comparative words
72. **Simple sentence**—a sentence consisting of one independent clause and no dependent clause
73. **Solecism**—non-standard grammatical usage; a violation of grammatical rules (ex: unflammable; they was)
74. **Structure**—the arrangement or framework of a sentence, paragraph, or entire work
75. **Style**—the choices a writer makes; the combination of distinctive features of a literary work (when analyzing style, one may consider diction, figurative language, sentence structure, etc.)
76. **Syllepsis**—a construction in which one word is used in two different senses (“After he threw the ball, he threw a fit.”)
77. **Syllogism**—a three-part deductive argument in which a conclusion is based on a major premise and a minor premise (“All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal.”)
78. **Synecdoche**—using one part of an object to represent the entire object (for example, referring to a car simply as “wheels”)
79. **Synesthesia**—describing one kind of sensation in terms of another (“a loud color,” “a sweet sound”)
80. **Syntax**—the manner in which words are arranged into sentences
81. **Theme**—a central idea of a work
82. **Thesis**—the primary position taken by a writer or speaker
83. **Tone**—the attitude of a writer, usually implied, toward the subject or audience
84. **Trope**—an artful deviation from the ordinary or principal signification of a word (hyperbole, metaphor, and personification are some examples of tropes)

85. **Understatement**—the deliberate representation of something as lesser in magnitude than it

86. **Vernacular**—the everyday speech of a particular country or region, often involving nonstandard usage