

Producing an Emotional Appeal

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn how to create an emotional appeal by analyzing an effective example. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Producing an Emotional Appeal
2. The Emotional Appeals in "I Have a Dream"

1. Producing an Emotional Appeal

Producing an emotional appeal requires an understanding of your audience and what may strike their emotions the most.

➞ **EXAMPLE** If you are giving a speech at an event to raise money for a children's hospital, it would be appropriate to use an appeal to emotions relating to children. For instance, the speaker could use an emotionally charged anecdote about a child who was sick and was cured at this hospital. This story stresses the value that the hospital had on improving the child's health.

In general, an effective way to create emotional appeal is to use words that have a lot of pathos associated with them. **Pathos** is an emotional appeal used in rhetoric that depicts certain emotional states.

Some examples of "pathos" charged words include: strong, powerful, tragic, equality, freedom, and liberty. These words can be used in a speech to intensify an emotional appeal to an audience.



TERM TO KNOW

Pathos

An appeal to the audience's emotions.

2. The Emotional Appeals in "I Have a Dream"

An example of a speech that is particularly effective at producing an emotional response with its listeners is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.



The speech uses **rhetoric** to convey the point of equal opportunity for all people. It is considered by many as a prime example of successful rhetoric and emotional appeal.

In the speech, Martin Luther King Jr. weaves current events into the fabric of American history, underscoring the tragedy with biblical rhetoric. King hinges his call for change on three refrains, or repeated phrases. He frames his vision for the future with the famous phrase, "I have a dream."

As his speech draws to a close, he wills his vision to become reality across the country, moving on to the refrain, "Let freedom ring!" He closes his speech with the repeated line, "Free at last!" King articulates cruel injustices, leads us in imagining a world without those injustices, and then appeals to his audiences emotions through these phrases and the idea of a world with equal opportunity.



TERM TO KNOW

Rhetoric

The art of using language, especially public speaking, as a means to persuade.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **producing an emotional appeal** requires an understanding of your audience and what may strike their emotions the most. An effective way to create emotional appeal is to use words that have a lot of pathos associated with them. Pathos is an emotional appeal used in rhetoric that depicts certain emotional states. **An example of a speech** that is particularly effective at producing an emotional response with its listeners is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. The speech uses rhetoric to convey the point of equal opportunity for all people.

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TERMS TO KNOW

Disposition

A habit, a preparation, a state of readiness, or a tendency to act in a specified way.

Pathos

An appeal to the audience's emotions.

Rhetoric

The art of using language, especially public speaking, as a means to persuade.