

20 Techniques of Persuasive Language

Examples of persuasive language are all around us: in advertising, politics, editorials, and reviews (just to name a few). It is important to understand techniques of persuasion so that you can identify and analyze them in use, but also so that you can utilize them in your own writing and speech.

Adjectives are descriptive words used to add emphasis and to create an emotional response.

Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in order to emphasize certain words and make them more memorable.

Anecdotes are short personal stories used to connect with the audience and add evidence or credibility to an argument.

Assertion is when an idea is presented as fact without full explanation or evidence; it is used to assert authority and make claims sound factual.

Attacks are when a speaker/writer addresses an opposing view or speaker and attacks their argument or character.

Bias is the presentation of only one side of an issue or viewpoint and is used to subjectively influence an audience.

Connotation is the ideas or feelings that a certain word invokes and is used to create certain emotional responses in an audience.

Credibility (Ethos) is the establishment of authority and reliability, and is used to gain the confidence and trust of the audience.

Emotion (Pathos) is feelings accentuated by experiencing love hate, fear etc. An appeal to emotion is used to engage with an audience and create an emotional response.

Exaggeration is the representation of something as greater than is actually the case and is used to grab the attention of the audience and emphasize certain points.

Evidence is the facts or information that indicate whether a view is true or valid and is used to give weight to an argument or belief.

Figurative Language is used to create imagery and express things non-literally; it can help to make an idea more emotive, vivid and convincing.

Generalization is the inference that a claim is true for most people or a majority and is used to speak to prevailing beliefs or prejudices of an audience.

Rule of Three is when groups of 3 adjectives or phrases are used to make ideas memorable.

Jargon is special words or expressions used by a profession or certain group; it is used to signal expertise and establish credibility.

Loaded Words are words charged with an underlying meaning or implication and are used to produce emotion in an audience.

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns and are used to create a sense of unity with an audience or distance from a common enemy.

Reason (Logos) is the power of the mind to think and form judgments logically; it is used to appeal to the rationality of an audience.

Repetition is the reoccurrence of certain words or phrases and it is used to emphasize certain ideas, and make them more memorable.

Rhetorical Questions are statements which are voiced as questions but are not expected to be answered; they are used to imply certain answers and draw audiences to certain conclusions.