

My Favorite Assignment Supplemental Teaching Materials

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Included in this packet:

1. Stimulus and discussion materials
2. Possible readings/online clips
3. Overview of assignment and rubric

1. Stimulus and Discussion Materials

[Online Discussion Post in preparation for in-class discussion]

INSTRUCTIONS:

The Visual Communication Guy states:

Whenever we look at something, visual rhetoric is in play. We look at the way things are designed and we make judgments about them. Our judgments come as a result of our past experience, education, age, and life experience. But our judgments are also affected by timing. If you watch a comedy about a funeral, it may be funny until you have a loved one die. The movie may suddenly become offensive. Your judgment has been shifted by life experience. (www.thevisualcommunicationguy.com)

Essentially, visual rhetoric refers to how we interpret and make meaning out of anything. After you have read the articles in the Module, answer the questions below. Use full sentences and paragraphs to answer these questions:

1. How does context influence visual rhetoric and how we view something? Give an example.
2. How can something visual persuade you to "do something"? Give an example.
3. How might the visual rhetoric of a thing change meaning over time? Give an example.

2. Possible Readings/Online Clips

MEDIA:

YouTube Clip from Vox Media, "Bad Typography has Ruined More Than Just the Oscars"

<https://youtu.be/eZSe4xVXHhI>

Brigham Young University's Silva Rhetoricae
<http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>

Visual Rhetoric Slide Presentation, Purdue OWL
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/teaching_resources/visual_rhetoric_slide_presentation.html

READINGS:

Foss, S. K. (2017). *Rhetorical criticism: Exploration and practice*. Waveland Press.

Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2020). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. Routledge.

Norman, D. (2013). *The design of everyday things: Revised and expanded edition*. Basic books.

Dirksen, J. (2015). *Design for how people learn*. New Riders.

Petroski, H. (1994). *The evolution of useful things*. Vintage.

3. Overview of Assignment and Rubric

The purpose of this assignment is to help you identify and analyze how visual rhetoric functions in everyday communication. Analyzing and articulating the persuasive functions of everyday objects will help you understand how communication functions across all types of industries – from advertising and marketing color schemes to the layout of business reports to a small conference room set up.

For this assignment, you are going to conduct a visual rhetorical analysis of an everyday object. We will learn how to do this in class, but you should start thinking now about what you want to analyze.

In communication studies, we call a designated piece of visual communication an "artifact." An artifact can be almost anything: it can be a 3-dimensional object or a digital or print piece of communication.

For this assignment, I want you to choose a 3-dimensional, "everyday" artifact that has some sort of meaning to you. Choose something you use regularly and consider a semi-essential artifact in your life.

Once you've identified your artifact, you'll conduct an analysis using the 6-step process below. You'll then present your findings in a 3-5 minute oral presentation to your peers.

6-Step Process

1. Choose an everyday artifact
2. Research the artifact's history, context, and usages – gather as much information as you can
3. Describe the artifact's elements and parts by separating it into components
4. Evaluate the rhetorical devices and elements of persuasion employed by the artifact
5. Explain how the artifact's visual rhetoric impacts its audience/users
6. Make an oral argument about the purpose or impact of the artifact based on your analysis

Rubric

Visual Rhetorical Analysis			
Criteria	Ratings		Pts
Analysis The artifact's elements and parts are separated out and described with sufficient detail.	2 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	2 pts
Analysis The artifact's context is explained and used to situate and understand the artifact itself.	2 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	2 pts
Rhetorical Devices The author explores the rhetorical devices in the visual - analyzing and giving examples for logos, ethos, and pathos plus any other devices.	2 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	2 pts
Design Principles The author explores the design principles used in the artifact; design principles come from research and/or class readings/lectures; Examples are given.	2 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	2 pts
Argument and Meaning The author explains how the pieces are related to one another and makes an argument about the artifact's purpose and impact.	2 pts Full Marks	0 pts No Marks	2 pts
			Total Points: 10