

Reading Rhetorically

A Reader for Writers



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How This Book Will Make You a More Successful Writer

By applying rhetorical reading techniques to your writing, you will learn

- To shape your own texts to accomplish your specific purposes in relation to varying situations and audiences
- To use the composing processes of skilled academic writers
- To practice the three ways that writers typically use readings in academic settings: as models to adapt, as objects to analyze, and as voices to respond to in a conversation
- To communicate your understanding of a text through effective summaries and paraphrases
- To expand your repertoire of writing strategies so that you can adopt and use methods you encounter in a wide variety of texts
- To write successful analyses and critiques of a text's argument and rhetorical strategies
- To write successful college-level research papers that address significant questions and make important points within a larger conversation
- To follow appropriate conventions for incorporating excerpts from source materials into your own writing without letting them take over your paper

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Preface

Reading Rhetorically grows out of our belief that academic reading, writing, and inquiry are inextricably linked and that all three are best learned within a rhetorical framework. Increasingly, many first-year writing courses emphasize reading as well as writing, not because students have reading problems but because college writing assignments require the ability to read analytically. Despite this increased emphasis on reading, few textbooks explicitly address reading as a process and those that do seldom treat reading as a rhetorical act. *Reading Rhetorically* does both.

Reading Rhetorically is an aims-based reader that teaches students to read rhetorically and to write about what they have read with rhetorical insight. Two important features distinguish it from other first-year readers: (1) its emphasis on reading as an interactive process of composing meaning, and (2) its emphasis on academic writing as a process in which writers engage with other texts. *Reading Rhetorically* teaches students how to see texts as positioned in a conversation with other texts, how to recognize the bias or perspective of a given text, and how to analyze texts for both content and rhetorical method. The book defines “reading rhetorically” as attending to a writer’s purposes within a rhetorical situation by examining both what the author says and how he or she says it. Specifically, this book teaches students how to analyze other texts by reading them with and against the grain, how to imitate other texts by learning their rhetorical strategies and genre conventions, and how to use other texts for their own purposes in conducting research. Many composition readers offer readings that provide either topics or models for student writing. In contrast, this collection organizes its selections by rhetorical aims. Our goal is to offer readings for rhetorical analysis so that students can learn about and then apply various rhetorical strategies in their own writing.

Distinctive Features

Reading Rhetorically is distinguished by the following features:

- The anthology contains high-interest readings that vary widely by aim, genre, length, subject matter, and rhetorical situation. These readings span a range of textual types that students will encounter in college.
- Explanations of rhetorical concepts provide an analytical framework for both reading and writing.

- Discussion of reading processes shows students how skilled academic readers construct a text's meaning.
- Presentation of writing processes emphasizes strategies for writing about reading.
- Three strands of writing assignments invite students to engage with the readings in the anthology chapters by (1) writing to match the rhetorical aim of the chapter's readings, (2) writing to examine rhetorical strategies, and (3) writing to conduct inquiry and synthesize multiple readings.
- Research is treated as a process of rhetorical reading in which students learn to develop research questions and evaluate sources within a rhetorical context.
- Citation conventions are presented as integral to rhetorical effectiveness.
- Through an extended example, the text follows the evolution of one student's writing project through several phases as the student moves from summary to rhetorical analysis to researched critique of a reading.
- Extensive discussion of argument introduces important concepts for rhetorical analysis such as categories of claims and ethical, logical, and audience-based appeals. In addition, the discussion of argument recognizes distinct forms of argument—position statements, evaluative arguments, proposals, and Rogerian arguments.
- All eight anthology chapters include a sample of student writing, three of them with MLA internal citations and a works cited list.
- The anthology features individual chapters on two important but often ignored aims: writing to explore and writing to seek common ground.
- Each reading selection is accompanied by prompts for (1) preview, (2) rhetorical analysis, and (3) application of techniques to one's own writing.
- The appendix integrates citation formats for print and electronic materials (including periodicals databases) in an extensive list of model MLA style citations.

Structure

The opening instructional portion of the text (Chapters 1 through 8) is organized into three parts that explain the demands of college reading and writing and offer conceptual frameworks and practical strategies for meeting these demands. Part One (Chapters 1 through 3) begins by asking students to reflect on *what* they read and *why*. Chapters 2 and 3 describe the special demands of academic reading and introduce students to the rhetorical reading strategies used by experts: building a context for reading and matching reading strategies to a text's genre and purpose. Part Two (Chapters 4 and 5) teaches students *how* to read rhetorically, first by "listening" to what a text is saying and doing, and second by "questioning" what a text is saying and doing. Chapter 4 offers practice in listening through annotating, mapping idea structure, summarizing, descriptive outlining, and writing a rhetorical précis, while Chapter 5 provides practice in questioning through analysis of a text's rhetorical appeals, language, and ideology.

Part Three (Chapters 6 through 8) focuses on writing about reading. Chapter 6 begins with an overview of typical reading-based writing assignments across the curriculum and then advises students on how to maintain writerly authority and manage their writing process as they write about what they have read. Chapter 7 teaches students how to use rhetorical reading as a research strategy as they formulate research questions and then choose readings by evaluating their relevance and reliability. Chapter 8 instructs students in the conventions of source-based writing—summary, paraphrase, direct quotation, citation formats—by placing these practices in a rhetorical framework.

Part Four (Chapters 9 through 16) offers an anthology of readings organized by aim. Each chapter in the anthology begins by examining distinctive features of each rhetorical aim: expressing and reflecting; inquiring and exploring; informing and explaining; analyzing and interpreting; taking a stand; evaluating and judging; proposing solutions; and seeking common ground. Readings are accompanied by a contextualizing headnote, preview questions for reading logs, and questions that help students analyze rhetorical methods and recognize techniques they might adopt in their own writing. Chapters end with a set of three writing assignments based on ways in which academic writers use readings: as models, objects for analysis, and voices in a conversation.

Three Strands of Writing Assignments

The three writing assignments that appear at the end of each chapter in Part Four invite students to engage with the chapter's readings in ways that parallel common academic ways of writing about reading:

- *As models:* Options in this strand ask students to write in a particular aims-based genre, using their own topic and purpose. This book's emphasis on rhetorical reading takes students beyond the usual imitation assignments found in other aims-based readers. Before trying their hand at a given type of writing, students learn to examine how context and genre affect writers' rhetorical choices.
- *As objects of analysis:* Options in this strand ask students to analyze rhetorically one or more of the texts in the chapter. Because many academic writers take as their field of study the texts produced by others (for example, historians analyze primary source documents, cultural critics analyze song lyrics or advertisements, lawyers examine the laws and statutes produced by legislators or the decisions of appellate courts), this strand prepares students for a type of writing assignment frequently encountered across the curriculum. In producing their own rhetorical analyses, students are aided by the questions that begin each chapter and those that accompany each reading. These questions help students identify and evaluate the effects of authors' rhetorical choices and offer beginning points for analytical essays.
- *As voices in a conversation:* Options in this strand ask students to place texts in conversation with one another and to join that conversation by

forwarding their own argument. These assignments invite students to use the readings in the chapter as a springboard for inquiry and discovery. Nearly all call for further research based on carefully formulated research questions and rhetorically based strategies for assessment and selection of sources. This strand of assignments prepares students to write the kind of multisource research papers frequently required in college courses across the curriculum.

Together, these strands offer instructors flexibility in the design and sequencing of assignments and give students guided practice in the three main ways that academic readers use texts in their writing.

Apparatus

The apparatus for the readings in the anthology section, Part Four, builds on the rhetorical reading concepts introduced in the first three parts. Specifically, Chapters 9 through 16 each begin with a discussion of the ways in which a particular rhetorical aim shapes a text and influences reader response. Following this discussion students will find a series of generic questions designed to facilitate their rhetorical reading of the chapter's texts. Because the questions are based on rhetorical features common to texts within a particular aim, these questions encourage focused rhetorical reading.

To enable students to read each text through a rhetorical lens, *Reading Rhetorically* provides contextualizing headnotes and pre- and post-reading questions. Headnotes provide not only biographical information about the author or authors but also information about the original context of the text's publication. Each reading selection is preceded by "For Your Reading Log" questions that ask students to consider their background knowledge and attitudes toward the text's topic and make predictions about the text. The "Thinking Critically" questions that follow each reading are of two types: "Responding as a Reader" and "Responding as a Writer." Generally, the first set of questions asks students to reflect on their experience of reading a given text and helps them analyze the ways it works rhetorically, both internally and in relationship to various external contexts. The second set of questions is designed to help students identify writing strategies that they might transfer to their own writing.

Strategies for Using Reading Rhetorically

The text's organizational structure facilitates easy syllabus design. The introductory chapters (Chapters 1 through 8) provide conceptual frameworks and practical strategies for reading and writing about the texts that appear in Part Four. Because the first three parts provide numerous opportunities for practicing the strategies being presented, students can work their way through these first eight chapters before proceeding to the anthology chapters, or they can

move back and forth between parts, trying out the reading and writing strategies on the selections in the anthology chapters.

Organized by aim, the anthology section offers high-interest reading selections that vary widely by aim, genre, length, and subject matter. There are many ways to use the chapters in the anthology section; instructors can select the aims-based chapters that best fit their course goals. For those instructors who wish to select readings by theme, we provide a thematic table of contents.

Reading Rhetorically is accompanied by an *Instructor's Resource Manual* and *Companion Website* <www.ablongman.com/bean> that offer teaching suggestions to assist both experienced and new instructors, including suggested syllabi, chapter-by-chapter teaching ideas, and additional resources for student reading and research. In addition, the manual suggests activities that will help students meet the outcomes identified in the Council of Writing Program Administrators' *Outcomes Statement*: (1) rhetorical knowledge; (2) the ability to connect critical thinking, reading, and writing; (3) acquisition of writing process strategies; and (4) knowledge of academic writing conventions and genres.

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