Questions to ask about Rhetorical Strategies

1. What is the **tone** of the text? Do you react at an emotional level as you read? Does this reaction change at all throughout the text?


3. Does the author consider ideas that are **opposed** to his or her own? How does s/he present them—as legitimate? Absurd? Partially correct? Utterly false?

4. How does the writer arrange his/her ideas? What are the patterns of **organization**? Particular to general? Broad to specific? Spatial? Chronological? Alternating? Block?

5. Does the text flow from one idea to the next? Or are **transitions** intentionally jarring? How do the transitions work?


7. Does the writer use **quotations**? Who is quoted? Is it a widely-recognized authority? A group of “average citizens”?

8. Does the text appeal to **logic, authority, or emotion**—or some combination of the three? Which does it use most? Is there a pattern in the appeals? Are there any flaws in the logic?


10. Is there anything unusual in the writers' use of **punctuation**? What punctuation or other techniques of emphasis (italics, capitals, underlining, ellipses, parentheses) does the writer use? Is punctuation over- or under used? Which marks does the writer use when, and for what effects? Dashes to create a hasty breathlessness? Semi-colons for balance or contrast?

11. Are important terms **repeated** throughout the text? Why?

12. Are there any particularly vivid **images** that stand out? What effect do these images have on the writers' purpose?
13. Are devices of **comparison** used to convey or enhance meaning? Which tropes--similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, etc. does the writer use? When does he/she use them? Why?


These questions are a modified form of those that originally appeared at http://www.writingcentre.ubc.ca/workshop/tools/rhet1.htm