

Rhetorical devices and their possible effect on the audience

stylistic / rhetorical device	function / effect
repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anaphora ("Now is the time to...") - alliteration ("trials and tribulation") - parallelism ("I have a dream that...") <p>the use of absolutes: "all", "never", "always"..</p> <p>the use of qualifiers: "perhaps", "some", "maybe"...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to stress / to put special emphasis on / to point out - to emphasize / to strengthen once again / to repeat key words/major arguments/important aspects - increase in intensity / to give more impact to words - to make s.th. more memorable and quotable
use of first person plural pronoun ("we", "our")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to involve the listeners/readers - speaker presumes/presupposes that listeners/readers support his/her point of view / agree with him/her (it seems unreasonable not to agree with the speaker) - speaker wants to impose his/her opinion on the reader - to create the illusion of a group identity/mutual understanding ("us" against "them") - to create solidarity - speaker identifies with the audience or wants audience to identify with him/her
drastic/vivid descriptions ("left you battered by storms of persecutions and staggered by the winds of police brutality")	to appeal to ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ... the emotions rather than to reason - ... the listeners'/readers' conscience
opposites/antithesis; negatives/positives use of pronouns : "us" vs. "them" praising models and heroes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to create identification - to create solidarity - to create a dichotomy - to tag a group emotionally as "good" or "bad" - to connect with the audience - to create the effect of unity and unanimity but also: to exclude/ostracize people, groups... - the speaker encompasses/represents the whole nation/party/movement...
rhetorical questions ("Do you really believe that ...?")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to involve listeners/reader - to make them think or question old beliefs - to arouse interest / to attract attention - to elicit consent
emotive language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to influence the listener's feelings directly (fears, hopes, desires...) - to trigger emotional support
enumeration (to enumerate) ("The problems are caused by our cars, our electronic devices and our factories")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to emphasize / to stress sth. - to make listeners/readers aware of the extent of the problem
climax ("These are not just my priorities. They're not even just your priorities. They're not even just Hispanic or Latino priorities. These are American priorities.")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is an increase in intensity (from weakest to strongest, from minor to major problem, from individual to more general)
comparison/simile (to compare s.th. to/with s.th.) ("You are blind as a bat") metaphor (for)/image ("manacle of segregation", "exile in his own land")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to arouse interest - to simplify complicated matters by referring to everyday/known experiences/phenomena - to appeal to the imagination - to add color to the speech - to make an argument more compelling

personification (to personify) ("America has given the Negro people a bad check")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to simplify matters by reducing complexity - to imply that the abstract unit can (re)act as one
symbol ("a key to advancement", "an open door to the future")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to appeal to the listeners' imagination - to refer to s.th.
irony/sarcasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indirect criticism
exaggeration /hyperbole ("he is not a man but a demon, a monster, a subverter and an enemy")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to provoke protest - to criticize the opponent - to launch into a polemic against - to be polemic - to stress / to highlight a fact
quoting experts/authorities; referring to statistics/polls/research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to back up/support one's arguments - to eliminate doubt
direct address to the listeners/readers ("Let us (not)...", "Be not afraid", "You American people – can you ask yourselves why ...?")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to make the audience feel involved/think about s.th. - to touch the listeners personally - to appeal to the listeners/readers
historical allusion (appeal to) shared values / a shared heritage traditional association placing oneself in the line other famous people (presidents, leaders...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to strengthen arguments - to appeal to patriotism - to stress a common ground - being part of national narrative or identity, allusions are deeply rooted in memories > acquire status of symbols that nation uses to describe their contemporary fears/hopes/concerns - to establish/maintain identity - to give direction to actions - to show continuity, stability - to deny self-interest
use of humour, elicitation of applause, thanking the audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to gain approval - to gain collaboration, sympathy - to unite the audience by shared laughter and humor - to create group unity
reference to God biblical allusions quoting the Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to stress that the aim/cause... is righteous - to give the impression that the speaker is on a divine/sacred mission or that he/she fulfils a God-given mission - to guarantee unquestioning approval/consent - to quell any kind of criticism /opposition (to nip criticism in the bud) - to give the impression of being inspired by God/ the Bible - to justify policy - to show genuine religious commitment - to obscure true motives/reasons/causes...
reference to (our) "nation"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to personify a nation as though it were a person with feelings, thoughts and a will of its own, a deified, sacred and enlarged representation of ourselves - to portray the nation as an amalgam of its collective best - to quell any kind of criticism - to gain support for the speakers aims - to incarnate all the people / the nation