



## Ethos: Lesson Plan

Topic	
An appeal to ethos is an appeal to the audience’s need to determine whether or not the source of information is reliable. A speaker or writer appeals to ethos when they make a rhetorical move that will affect the audience’s trust or belief in them, whether that be personally or as a source of information for the topic at hand.	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English</li> <li>Public Speaking/Debate</li> </ul>	30-45 minutes
Video link:	
<a href="https://academy4sc.org/topic/ethos-trust-me/">https://academy4sc.org/topic/ethos-trust-me/</a>	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
Students will be able to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define ethos.</li> <li>List different tools that can be used to make an appeal to ethos.</li> <li>Explain how to spot a fallacious appeal to ethos.</li> </ul>	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Rhetoric, rhetorical appeal	
Materials Needed	
Worksheet	
Before you watch	
<b>Quick write:</b> Ask students to think of a recent experience they had hearing information from someone. Have them consider how they viewed the information. Did the source affect their trust in the information? How so?	
While you watch	

1. What is an appeal to ethos?
2. Who first discussed ethos as a rhetorical appeal?
3. List two methods of making an appeal to ethos that speakers but not writers can make use of.

#### After you watch/discussion questions

1. Can you recall a time when ethos affected your evaluation of an argument?
2. How can writers make up for the loss of auditory and visual appeals to ethos that speakers have?
3. Between explicit and implicit appeals to ethos, do you find one more effective than the other? Why?

#### Activity Ideas

- **Speech idea:** Have students choose a topic that they feel they are an expert on—it does not have to be an academic topic. Each student must create an argument supporting a view they have on the topic, and support that argument by appealing to ethos (for example, maybe a student who has been dancing for several years thinks that more male students should join the dance team). Students should consider the visual and auditory aspects of their appeal. In addition to presenting their 2-5 minute speech, students should submit a 200-500 word write up explaining how they used ethos in their speech.
- **Essay idea:** Assign students to read [George Orwell's essay "Why I Write."](#) Have students write a rhetorical analysis in which they explain how Orwell used ethos and at least one other rhetorical device to support his purpose in writing this essay.

#### Sources/places to learn more

1. Connors, R. J. (1979). "The Differences Between Speech and Writing: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos." *College Composition and Communication*. Vol. 30(3), 285-290.
2. "Ethos." *Excelsior College OWL*, 11 Sept. 2018, <https://owl.excelsior.edu/argument-and-critical-thinking/modes-of-persuasion/modes-of-persuasion-ethos/>.
3. "ethos, n." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/64840](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/64840).
4. Gayle, Kendra, et al. "Ethos." *Writing Commons*, 16 Apr. 2012, <https://writingcommons.org/article/ethos/>.



5. Scopa, Sally. "Ethos." LitCharts. LitCharts LLC, 5 May 2017.