Unit 2 Terms: Rhetoric and Propaganda
Rhetoric

the study and uses of written, spoken, and visual language
to organize and maintain social groups, construct meanings and identities, coordinate behavior, mediate power, persuade, produce change, and create knowledge
Rhetorical Situation

the circumstances in which one communicates to persuade which include the author, the audience, the message, and the context
Argument

a statement or idea that someone tries to persuade somebody else to believe; a proposed piece of action upon which reasonable people might disagree.
Looking not only at what a text says, but at what it does, including considering the claims, devices, and strategic moves an author makes in hopes of persuading an audience; because many claims and arguments within texts are implied rather than explicit, performing a rhetorical analysis of a text helps give us a better sense of how and to what extent an argument is effective.
Tone

an author’s use of words and writing style to convey his or her attitude towards a topic; what the author feels about the subject
Sympathetic Audience

the easiest audience to persuade; has an emotional connection to the particular argument being made and/or the author
Neutral Audience

an audience that has no preconceived views or opinions of their own about the argument; they have no bias one way or the other and so can be persuaded with enough evidence
Hostile Audience

type of audience that is closed to the argument the author is trying to make; they already disagree with the conclusion or are closed to the person making the argument
Purpose

what effect the author intends their argument to have
Claim

something the author wants the audience to believe
Evidence

the support, reasons, data/information used to help persuade/prove an argument
Rhetorical Strategies

ways authors craft language, both consciously and subconsciously, in order to have an effect on readers
Warrant

the assumption, common belief, or general principle that connects the claim to its support; can be based on the values of the arguer and/or audience.
Context

the situation which generates the need for writing; can include the time period or timing, location, current events, and cultural significance
Connotation

an idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal or primary meaning.
Denotation

the literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas the word suggests.
Bias

cause to feel or show inclination or prejudice for or against someone or something
Fact

a piece of verifiable information used as evidence
Opinion

a view or judgment formed about something not necessarily based on fact or knowledge
Appeal to Ethos

a method of persuasion
in which the speaker or
writer attempts to
persuade the audience
by demonstrating his
own credibility or
authority
Appeal to Pathos

a method of persuasion in which the speaker or writer attempts to persuade the audience by creating an emotional response
Appeal to Logos

a method of persuasion in which the speaker or writer attempts to persuade the audience by reason and/or evidence
Propaganda

information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.
Advertising

the activity or profession of producing persuasive marketing for commercial products or services
Appeal to Authority

the propaganda technique of citing prominent figures to support a position, idea, argument, or course of action
Assertion

the propaganda technique of presenting a positive statement as fact; implies that what is stated is self-evident and needs no further proof
Bandwagon

a propaganda technique that attempts to persuade the target audience to take a course of action because “everyone else is taking it”
Glittering Generalities

propaganda technique of using intensely emotionally appealing words closely associated with highly valued concepts and beliefs such as “love of country,” and “home”
Virtue Words

propaganda technique of using words in a value system of the target audience which tend to produce a positive image when attached to a person or issue such as “peace,” “happiness,” and “security”
Least of Evils

a propaganda technique of acknowledging that the course of action being taken is perhaps undesirable but that any alternative would result in an outcome far worse.
Name Calling

a propaganda technique that attempts to arouse prejudices in an audience by labeling the object as something the target audience fears, hates, loathes, or finds undesirable.
a propaganda technique that attempts to convince the audience that the author’s positions reflect the common sense of the people; the author uses ordinary language and mannerisms in attempting to identify their point of view with that of the average person.
Slogan

propaganda technique of using a brief, striking, self-perpetuating phrase
Inductive Reasoning

type of reasoning that moves from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories
Deductive Reasoning

type of reasoning that starts with a generally agreed upon statement or hypothesis and examines the possibilities to reach a specific, logical conclusion; goes from a general case to a specific instance