**ENGL 1023**

**Essay Assignment 3: Rhetorical Analysis**

The Rhetorical Analysis requires you to compare two texts: a mass media piece about a scientific topic and the original research report on that scientific topic. Your goal is to explain the differences between popular writing and academic writing to an audience of incoming first-year students.

**Introduction:**

Your introduction provides all the background information readers will need to understand your analysis: the titles of the two texts, the names of their authors, and the topic that the two texts have in common.

The introduction should also include your **essay map**, which will present the major rhetorical differences between the two texts that you will analyze.

Example: *“Meet the Joshfish,” a popular source, has a more informal tone, is primarily meant to entertain, and does not cite any sources beyond the original report. In contrast, the original report uses a formal tone and has a clear purpose to inform, and it cites several other scientific sources.*

**Body:**

In the body, analyze the rhetorical features outlined in your essay map. Below is a list of possible rhetorical features you could discuss and how they operate in popular and academic texts:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rhetorical Feature** | **Popular Source** | **Academic Source** |
| Audience | Written for layperson | Written for experts/scholars |
| Purpose | To entertain | To inform |
| Citation | Cites few/no sources | Cites several sources |
| Jargon (field-specific language) | Uses little/no jargon | Uses frequent jargon |
| Tone | Relatively informal (uses contractions, clichés, exclamations, etc.) | Formal (avoids any markers of informal language such as clichés and colloquialisms) |
| Length | Usually shorter | Usually longer |
| Visuals | Uses photos/pictures | Uses graphs, tables, charts, etc. |
| Sentence Structure | Uses shorter, simpler sentences | Uses more complex sentences |

For each rhetorical feature you discuss, you should:

* Analyze how the two texts treat the feature differently (e.g., does one have a formal tone while the other has an informal tone?)
* Use several examples from each text to prove how the two sources treat the feature differently
* Explain why the two texts treat the feature differently (e.g., why would a magazine article have an informal tone while a scientific report would have a formal tone?)

**Conclusion:**

Your conclusion should answer the “so what?” question—why does your essay matter? How will your essay help incoming freshmen understand the difference between popular writing and academic writing?