

AI and Persuasion: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos Supports

Why?	
This lesson on ethos, pathos, and logos equips students with the foundational skills of persuasive communication, crucial for both academic and real-world contexts. Understanding these rhetorical strategies enables students to critically analyze arguments and craft more compelling, well-rounded presentations or essays. Using an AI chatbot helps students better understand technology and how it can help them through challenging processes. The lesson builds critical thinking and empathy, as students learn to consider diverse perspectives and the emotional and ethical dimensions of communication, enhancing their ability to engage in constructive and persuasive discourse.	
Materials Needed	Time needed
Computers or tablets with internet access for each student or pair of students. Access to a generative AI application, such as ChatGPT.	Approximately 45 - 60 minutes
Objectives	
Students will be able to define and differentiate between ethos, pathos, and logos, and identify examples of each in various forms of communication. Students will be able to apply ethos, pathos, and logos effectively to construct persuasive arguments in written or oral form. Students will be able to use generative AI tools like ChatGPT to generate and refine proofs for ethos, pathos, and logos in support of a given position. Students will be able to collaborate with peers to develop and present arguments that incorporate ethos, pathos, and logos, demonstrating the ability to give and receive constructive feedback.	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Ethos: Ethos refers to the credibility or ethical appeal of the speaker or writer. This is an attempt to convince the audience of the persuader's reliability, competence, and respectability, making the argument more believable and trustworthy. Pathos: Pathos involves appealing to the audience's emotions, aiming to evoke feelings such as sympathy, excitement, anger, or compassion to persuade them. The goal is to connect with the audience on an emotional level to influence their response. Logos: Logos is the appeal to logic and reason, using facts, statistics, logical arguments, and clear reasoning to persuade the audience. This sort of proof constructs a rational argument that makes logical sense to the listener or reader.	

Lesson

This lesson would be most effective as a part of a lesson in which students are preparing persuasive speeches or essays. The ideal point to use this lesson is when students have identified their topics and are working on amassing a variety of supports for their position.

(see example at end of plan.)

- **Objective Sharing:** Briefly outline the lesson's objectives and the importance of providing a variety of types of support to convince different people of your position.
- **Concept Introduction:** Briefly introduce ethos, pathos, and logos, providing clear definitions. See the terms above in Key Concepts & Vocabulary. (Examples may be found online.)
- **Generative AI Introduction and Demonstration:** Show students how to use a generative AI chatbot, such as ChatGPT, to generate examples of ethos, pathos, and logos for a given topic. You might input a position and ask ChatGPT to provide arguments based on each rhetorical strategy.
 - **Example Prompts:** Show students some ideas for prompts to put into the chat. (Such as “Give me some ideas for ethos supports to help convince people about [topic].” “How could I emotionally convince people of [topic]?” “What are some logical proofs that would help me get people to understand that [topic]?”)
- **Group Exploration:** Have students work individually or in pairs. Allow students time to experiment with ChatGPT, inputting different positions and asking for ethos, pathos, and logos proofs. Assign students a position or let them choose one. Students can then use ChatGPT to generate specific proofs for their positions using each rhetorical strategy. Encourage them to refine or expand on the AI-generated ideas to make them more personalized and compelling.
- **Student Presentations:** Students share the ethos, pathos, and logos supports they developed for their position. This can be done in small groups or in front of the entire class, depending on time and class size.
- **Peer Feedback:** Classmates provide feedback, focusing on the effectiveness and creativity of the rhetorical proofs presented.

Discussion Questions

Which rhetorical strategy did you find most compelling to use, and why?

Can you think of a situation where one of these strategies might be more effective than the others?

How did using generative AI to generate proofs for each strategy change your approach to building an argument?

Did you encounter any challenges in applying ethos, pathos, or logos to your position? How did you overcome them?

How do ethos, pathos, and logos work together to create a well-rounded argument?

Which strategy do you think is most overlooked or underused in everyday arguments and why?

Supplemental Activity Ideas

Analyze Famous Speeches: Students select or are assigned famous speeches from history, literature, or contemporary media. They analyze and identify the use of ethos, pathos, and logos, discussing how these elements contribute to the speech's overall persuasive power. Students could copy and paste the text of a speech into an AI chatbot and ask it to find instances of each of the types of proof.

Create Persuasive Advertisements: Students work individually or in groups to create an advertisement for a product or social cause. They must intentionally use ethos, pathos, and logos to persuade their audience, later presenting and explaining their rhetorical choices.

One Style Debate: Organize a debate where students must rely predominantly on one of the rhetorical strategies (ethos, pathos, or logos) assigned to them. They could use generative AI to help them craft their support. After the debate, discuss how the different approaches affected the persuasiveness of their arguments.

Example

User: I am writing a persuasive essay on the topic of Puerto Rico. My position is that Puerto Rico should be granted statehood. Can you please help me come up with ethos, pathos, and logos support for this position? Give me two each, no more than 12 words per support.

ChatGPT:

Ethos:

1. "Experts agree, statehood offers Puerto Rico economic and political stability."
2. "Respected leaders advocate for Puerto Rico's equal rights through statehood."

Pathos:

1. "Puerto Ricans deserve the same security and opportunities as other Americans."
2. "Statehood can heal the long-standing neglect and injustice faced by Puerto Ricans."

Logos:

1. "Statehood would mean fair representation in Congress for 3.2 million Puerto Ricans."
2. "Economic analyses show statehood could improve Puerto Rico's financial health significantly."

User: Help me expand on some of these statements. For Ethos #1 and #2, what sort of person might be a good source for these?

ChatGPT: For Ethos #1, a good source could be an economist or political scientist who specializes in territorial affairs and state governance. Their expertise would lend credibility to the claim about economic and political stability resulting from statehood.

For Ethos #2, a respected political leader or civil rights advocate who has a history of supporting equal rights and territories' issues would be an ideal source. Their endorsement of Puerto Rico's statehood would strengthen the argument through their ethical and moral standing.

User: What would be a good way to introduce Pathos #2?

ChatGPT: A compelling way to introduce Pathos #2 could be: "Imagine the pain and frustration of being treated as second-class citizens in your own country. Statehood can mend these deep wounds, bringing justice and equality to Puerto Ricans."