

Document Analysis

Adapted from Interdisciplinary Strategies

What to look for:

1. Speaker
2. Occasion
3. Audience
4. Purpose
5. Subject
6. -tone

How to find it:

1. **Speaker:** Is there someone identified as the speaker? Can you make some assumptions about this person? What class do they come from? What political party? A gender?
2. **Occasion:** What prompted the author to write this piece? What event led to its publication or development?
3. **Audience:** Does the speaker identify an audience? What assumptions can you make about the audience? Is it a mixed racial/gender group? What social class? Political party? Who was the document created for? Are there any words or phrases that are unusual or different? Does the speaker use language that is specific for a unique audience? Does the speaker evoke God? Nation? Liberty? History? Hell? Does the speaker allude to classical themes: the Fates, the Classics, Pericles, Caesar? Why is the speaker using this type of language? What is the mode of delivery?
4. **Purpose:** What is the speaker's purpose? In what ways does he convey this message? How would you perceive the speaker giving this speech? What is the document saying? What is the emotional state of the speaker? How is the speaker trying to spark a reaction in the audience? What words or phrases show the speaker's tone? How is the document supposed to make you feel?
5. **Subject:** What is the subject of the piece? How do you know this? How has the subject been selected and presented by the author?
6. **-tone:** What is the author's tone? How is the author perceived by the audience? What is the author's mood? What is the author's point-of-view?