The Three Rhetorical Appeals: Ethos, Pathos, Logos

The goal of argumentative writing is to persuade your audience that your ideas are valid, or more valid than someone else's. The **Greek philosopher Aristotle** divided the means of persuasion, appeals, into three categories--**Ethos, Pathos, Logos.**

Ethos (Credibility), or **ethical appeal**, means convincing by the character of the author. We tend to believe people whom we respect. One of the central problems of argumentation is to project an impression to the reader that you are someone worth listening to, in other words making yourself as author into an authority on the subject of the paper, as well as someone who is likable and worthy of respect.

Pathos (Emotional) means persuading by appealing to the reader's emotions. Language choice affects the audience's emotional response, and emotional appeal can effectively be used to enhance an argument. An appeal to pathos causes an audience not just to respond emotionally but to identify with the writer's point of view--to feel what the writer feels.

Logos (Logical) means persuading by the use of reasoning. Logos (Greek for 'word') refers to the internal consistency of the message--the clarity of the claim, the logic of its reasons, and the effectiveness of its supporting evidence.

Adapted from *Durham Teaching Learning Center* http://courses.durhamtech.edu/perkins/aris.html 9/7/07.

To Appeal to Logic (logos)	To Develp Ethos	To Appeal to Emotion (pathos)
Theoretical, abstract language Precise word choice Literal and historical analogies Definitions Factual data and statistics Quotations Citations from experts and authorities	Language appropriate to audience and subject Restrained, sincere, fair minded presentation Appropriate level of diction Correct grammar/syntax	Vivid, concrete language Emotionally loaded language/words with strong connotative meaning. Emotional examples Vivid descriptions Narratives of emotional events Figurative language
	Effect	
Evokes a cognitive, rational response Comes across as un-rhetorical	Demonstrates author's reliability, competence, and respect for the audience's ideas and values Evokes trust	Evokes an emotional response Encourages identification with author or subject

Adapted from Callaway, Michael. "Resources for Writers" http://www.public.asu.edu/~macalla/logosethospathos.html. 9/7/07.