

Rhetorical analysis of a multimodal text

For the second essay for English Composition 1, you'll be composing a formal rhetorical analysis—what Anne Frances Wysocki and Dennis Lynch refer to in *The DK Handbook* as understanding the parts of a communication or text and “how those parts fit together to make a whole—and how the parts work to make a communicator's purpose clear to the intended audience in a particular context” (90).

For this essay you'll be analyzing the choices that Lynda Barry has made in composing “Common Scents,” a multimodal, or text that uses more than one media—in this case text and drawings—to communicate with the audience. A successful rhetorical analysis will argue for a specific interpretation of Barry's purpose (what she specifically wants the audience to do, think, or feel after reading “Common Scents”) and articulate who her audience is based on the analysis of her composing choices. As we've talked about, a choice can be anything that Barry does in writing her comic/essay—word choice, organization, color palette, drawing style, pathos, logos, ethos, etc. In using her choices as evidence, you will need to describe clearly and in detail the choices she makes to your reader. For this assignment, *you should assume that your reader has never read Lynda Barry's “Common Scents,” but might be interested in what Barry might have to say about the topic.*

As with your first essay, I will not require a specific page length for this assignment. I will, however, suggest that essays that use evidence in a convincing manner will take at least three pages, on average, if using academic standards for document style (12 point Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins). You should, however, use Standard American English and try to adhere to grammatical, spelling, and punctuation standards, as this is an academic essay.

You must post a full draft of this essay (as a PDF, please) to the Blackboard digital drop-box by the end of your scheduled class time next week, the week of March 8, 2011. You will also be assigned to online peer review groups on Blackboard, so please check your GTC email frequently.