

Jfk inaugural address analysis essay



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In 1961 John F. Kennedy gives his inaugural speech to the desperate Americans. The American citizens are in need of hope, and need to believe this young president is the right man to lead their future. His inaugural speech gave Americans comfort, and hope that they needed at the time. Throughout his speech Kennedy uses emotion-arousing words, anaphora, antithesis, and rhetorical questions to encourage Americans to show their patriotism. In the beginning of Kennedy's speech he uses antithesis. Kennedy starts off with an antithesis in order to leer his audience in. Kennedy constantly uses this rhetorical device throughout his speech because it stands out and gets his audience thinking. For example, by saying "ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country" Kennedy is telling us to stop blaming America for what its become and start fixing it. He wants us to know that we can also do something that will help ourselves, and others. Kennedy uses these statements to help inspire Americans to continue to support to their country in order to help make America be significant. Throughout the speech Kennedy uses anaphora to state his point. He constantly says "Let both sides..." to make an impact on his audience. Repeating "let" emphasizes the point he is trying to make. He wants both nations to combine in unity to help the American citizens. These uses of anaphora purposely catch the attention of the listeners so they have a better understand what Kennedy is trying to convey. Kennedy uses rhetorical questions to make his audience think and give them new ideas they may not have thought of before. For example, Kennedy says "Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind?" His purpose of using this is to strengthen his audience and make them believe

they are obligated to participate. In his very last paragraph he uses a rhetorical question to bring his speech together and make an impact on his audience. Another rhetorical strategy that Kennedy uses are emotion arousing words. He constantly uses words like freedom, devotion, loyalty, and sacrifice in his speech. This use of pathos changes the mood of his audience. Each of these words inspire people to show their patriotism. When Kennedy uses ' we' instead of ' I', he is enlightening his audience. Using ' we' is encouraging American citizens to work together and become united. The purpose of Kennedy using significant words is to make a strong connection with his audience, and to embellish the idea of Americans working together in order to make our country a better place. The rhetorical strategies that Kennedy uses make a big difference in his speech. He uses these devices to change the emotion and mind of his audience. This speech makes American citizens want to take a step and help their country. The use of rhetorical devices can change the way people act and think.