

A rhetorical analysis of anna quindlen's the wages of teaching

Profession, Teacher



Does the Toughest Job Deserve More Pay? A Rhetorical Analysis of Anna Quindlen's "The Wages of Teaching". In the job field, teaching has always been perceived as a nine to five, easy money career. It is salary based, with weekends and summers off. In the 2005 editorial of Newsweek Magazine called "The Wages of Teaching". Anna Quindlen fights to boost teacher's salaries. Quindlen's ethical appeal combined with a strong emotional appeal ties her audience into her cause. With the use of strong authorities, anecdotes and an analogy, Quindlen makes a very compelling case. Quindlen's first assertion is "Teaching is the toughest job out there".(100) To uphold her assertion she uses anecdotes from her own first-hand experience and also quotes by a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Frank McCourt. Along with these anecdotes she offers an authority from The Department of Education, based off their employee turn-over rates. Quindlen closes her first assertion with an analogy that exposes the effect that teachers have on American Citizens. These anecdotes along with the authority and analogy, make various emotional appeals to the readers. Bringing up anger to the assertion that teachers have the toughest jobs. And also a compassionate effect by persuading the audience to change their outlook on what a teacher's job actually entails. This section of Quindlen's editorial is effective in convincing the audience that teaching is not an easy job. Quindlen makes a good decision by first introducing her own experience in teaching, because it reveals to the reader that she has some first-hand knowledge of the assertion she has made. She then supports her own anecdote by using another anecdote from McCourt's book, "Teacher Man". Quindlen takes a risk by supporting her assertion with an anecdote as strong as McCourt's,

because some of her audience might disagree that teaching is harder than manual labor. Which in turn, may cause her reader to dismiss the assertion entirely. Quindlen did well to introduce an authority from The Department of Education that further supported her assertion. She was wise in doing so because statistics are harder to argue with than an opinion is. Quindlen's choice then to use an analogy that illustrates teachers as "...the gardeners of the landscape of the human race".(100) was also well thought out. By using this analogy, she emphasizes on how imperative teachers are to making competent citizens. All-together, Quindlen's choices in this section were well deliberated and effective by introducing the audience to what teaching actually entails. Quindlen's last assertion is, " The National Education Association has been pushing for a minimum starting salary of \$40, 000 for all teachers".(100) To support her assertion, Quindlen uses a well-chosen authority from The National Education Association. As well as a well-thought allusion, and two strategically placed anecdotes. With these specific anecdotes, along with the authority and allusion, Quindlen gives her assertion an ethical and emotional appeal. Quindlen's choice in this paragraph is a good one. By already opening her reader to her first assertion, Quindlen makes this assertion easier to believe. Her use of an authority from The National Education Association presents her claim as a problem to her audience. Quindlen's choice was well-calculated because it sets up for a more powerful allusion. She presents her allusion as an endowment fund made up from the corporate world by taxing their profits. In doing so Quindlen creates an opening so the reader will take the time to consider her authority that teachers don't get paid well enough. This causes

her assertion to have more power behind it. When Quindlen introduced her allusion she was sharp enough to make it into an easy solution for her authority. In addition, Quindlen closes her assertion by quoting McCourt and then writing her own anecdote. By doing so causes the audience to think of their own experiences with teachers they may have had in the past. This causes the reader to have a personal connection with Quindlen's assertion through her anecdote. Therefore placing an ethical and strong emotional appeal on her audience by flat out telling them, " They made us. We owe them. "(100) Teachers are imperative to America, there's no contest there. But the real question is, are teacher's wages effecting the job field which we rely on so much? After reading Quindlen's editorial, the audience would be ignorant not to agree with her. Quindlen's strategic method to first bring her ethical appeal and then to bind her audience to it emotionally was well chosen. To place the cherry on top of her well supported thesis, she brought in Pulitzer Prize-Winning writer Frank McCourt, which along with she provides a well thought out " blue-print" for a solution to her case. Work Cited Quindlen, Anna. " The Wages of Teaching. " Newsweek 28 Apr. 2005: 100. Print.