

# Seattle letter analysis



lisa Nguyen Ms. Nys Pre-Ap English II / 4th September 4, 2012 Rhetorical Analysis Leader of his native tribe, Chief Seattle, in his persuasive letter to President Pierce, illustrate his mentality on how sacred the land he lives on is to him and to his people. He tries to gain President pierce attention on the fact that the two men have different views on what the land is. Seattle defines the land as his past, present and future, but to Pirece it is merely just land to use for the present. He construct his letter by using ethical appeals in the form of similes and rhetorical questions. Seattle begins his letter to President Pierce by asking a series of rhetorical questions emphasizing the point that if no one own the " Sky or the freshness of the air and sparkle of the water" how could anyone buy them. Settle disply his belief in the questions by stating that the " idea was strange " that people could buy and sell things that they cannot own. Seattle contines to appky his beliefs and ethics by claiming that " Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore... All are holy in the memory and experience of my people" He then goes on explaining that They cherish and respect the land . Settle uses these beliefs as a backdrop for his letter and continue on with it when he emphasize " Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to earth. " Seattle uses these ethics and beliefs to convey the point that both men are living beings and so is the land, so they should respect and love it as if one should love another human being. After Seattle expresses how ' holy' the land is, he carries on comparing the land to a human being with similes. Seattle compares his blood to nature by stating that ' we know the sap which course thought the trees as we know the blood that courses thought our veins.'" Seattle uses these similes to show how connected he and his people are connected to nature. He extends his point with by presenting another simile '

the water murmur is the voice of my father's father' this shows how much history is connected to him and his people with the land and also how important it is. The similes allow President Pierce to see how important the land is to Seattle. Lastly, Seattle concludes his letter by asking president pierce cascade rhetorical questions. Seattle asked Pierce ' What would happen when the buffalo are all slaughtered? The wild horse tame? What will happen when the secret corners of the forest are heavy with the scent of many man and the view of the ripe hills blotted with talking wires.... " Seattle gives President Pierce the third the degree, because Seattle used many techniques in his letter to president pierce to not only get him to not take over Seattle land, but to see how he and his people view the land. Chief Seattle is a strong and intelligent man that only wanted to live in the way of his people and hoped that the letter will get President Pierce to respect their ways.