

# A message to my mom

Sociology, Communication



The genre that I used to create my visual document was a video. My audience, which is my mom, is able to connect instantly with the pictures, instead of reading a bunch of words and trying to figure out the meaning. My mom has been going through a rough time being away from me, and has felt alone ever since I moved on to college. Through the use of video I am able to display my thoughts and emotions through multiple pictures, texts, and background music. I gathered old photos of us together, and I am hoping to send a message that she should never feel alone. I came to the conclusion that I was going to do a video because of two examples I found on the internet. Through watching these videos, it was easy to see that pathos is much easier to accomplish when you have multiple pictures with audio versus a simple text. I am able to better examine my genre by doing a rhetorical analysis of two separate videos, my own video, and finally reflecting on my creation and writing process.

The genre that I chose to do was a video because I believe it best portrayed the message that I was trying to communicate to my mom. Two other examples that I used to determine my genre were both commercials that exemplified pathos, ethos, and logos. One video was a commercial concerning a dog named Maddie and her owner. Chevy was the company that created this commercial, and they were trying to relate to pet owners by showing the complete life of a dog alongside her owner from death to the time they first meet. It's a commercial that brings out plenty of sadness, but also leaves you feeling happy. By bringing out emotion the creators of the commercial are making us feel as though we can trust them. If we as the

audience can relate to them, then we will believe what they say. This is their way of establishing ethos.

The timeline of this commercial is actually in reverse chronological order. It starts off with the dog on the verge of death, and then makes its way to the time Maddie and her owner came together. Although it may not seem logical to put the events of the commercial in this order, it actually works well in this case. The commercial is shown from the memory of the owner, and right before Maddie's death you get a flashback of their life together. By doing this they are relating to dog owners, especially those who have already lost their beloved dogs, therefore it is an effective use of logos. The other commercial that I watched was a Metlife insurance commercial. In this commercial there is a daughter and her dad, who appear to have everything. Their life seems great together, and both the father and the daughter seem happy.

Eventually, we learn that the dad has no job, and he is sacrificing all his time and happiness in order to make his daughter's life a better place. Metlife wants to connect with viewers who have children, and know the difficulties of being a parent. There is plenty of sadness in the video, but there is also a lot of happiness. Bringing out these emotions and using pathos helps the audience better absorb the message it is trying to convey. The message that Metlife wants to depict is that every hardship is worth your child's future. By relating to parents who have kids both old and young, Metlife is establishing a trust between themselves and the audience. Logically this video is well put together.

The video starts with the father and daughter both laughing and smiling, which sets us up to believe that everything is alright. When we learn that the dad doesn't have a job and is sacrificing all that he has we can understand that he wants to protect his daughter from the truth. This is a good use of logos because it makes us think the same way a parent thinks which helps the audience better relate to it. Both of these commercials were a strong influence for me when it came to deciding a genre. Watching the emotional appeals in each showed me that my document will be most effective if I can create some kind of video. When looking at the specific purpose of my visual document, I knew I needed to effectively include ethos, pathos, and logos into it. Bringing up memories through past photos allows me to elicit strong emotion from my mom. At 1: 10 in my video there is a picture of my mom and I when I was four years old, and there's a small caption at the bottom that reads, " I am never too far away. "

This is just one example of my attempts to evoke emotion. Although I don't live at home anymore, I am only two hours away from her. By reminding my mom that I can be home quickly it will bring out a calm and content feeling. I can use the emotion that mom is feeling to create a strong connection between use, therefore establishing ethos. If my mom feels attached to me through these pictures then she'll be more inclined to trust me, and ultimately listen to the message I am trying to give. Hopefully these pictures will spark some special memories between my mom and I and she's able to feel that I am still at home with her. In order to achieve logos in my visual document I put all the pictures I used in chronological order. This makes sense from a logical standpoint because my mom is able to sequentially

relive the time I was growing up in a short, five minute video. That makes the video much easier to follow along. Towards the end of the video I have a recent picture of us, and there is a text at the bottom that reads, " Know that you will be in my future life. " It makes logical sense for the video to end this way because it leaves my mom with a hopeful feeling that she will not be alone in the moments to come. My creation and writing process first began with determining my audience and purpose.

Once I decided my audience was going to be my mom I then determined that my purpose was to show my mom that she shouldn't feel alone despite me being in college. Watching videos online brought me to two commercials that caught my eye, because they heavily consisted of Pathos. This is how I knew I wanted to create a video. Using a video made it easy for me to bring out as much emotion as I could, because I was able to use visuals, audio, and text. I collected old photos of when I was younger and placed them into the the video. This created pathos because these photos hold significant and joyful times for my mom. A big part of my decision to do a video was because I was able to add background music, which was impossible if I was doing a poster or photo essay. The background music I chose to implement was the song Rivers and Roads by The Head and the Heart. This song makes you feel sad but optimistic at the same time, so I thought it was perfect for my video. The music adds a lot because it elicits even more emotion from my mom. I put in a couple of sentences at the beginning of the video to establish the message I was trying to communicate. I also added 4 little texts throughout the video to remind my audience of the purpose. I did not rely on these texts to tell the

message however, because I knew that this was a visual document and needed to let my pictures portray the message.

The audio and text simply pushed that message further along. Using the two videos that I watched before creating my visual document, I was able to construct a stronger video that contained all three of the rhetorical strategies ethos, pathos, and logos. I then wrote my essay based off of what I watched and what I had created. By creating an emotional visual piece that brings out emotion and credibility I am able to illustrate my message to my mom in a way that she can effectively understand. Overall I am happy that I chose to do a video for my genre. A video allows me to bring out plenty of emotion because I can use photos, music, and text. Videos are more effective at using pathos because they can create something that is moving and happening right in front of you. You can't get the same level of ethos from a photo essay or a poster, because it is still and lifeless. By creating a video I was able to learn so much more about what a video can be capable of when it comes to rhetorical strategies. Reflecting on my own visual document and analysing two separate videos for their rhetorical strategies was a great way for me to learn more about the video genre. The video is effective at delivering the message that my mom should no longer feel that she is alone, and it delivers it in a way that is fun and understandable.