

Rhetorical analysis.

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In Mark Twain's passage, "Two Ways of Seeing a River," the reader is forced to question within themselves about how much beauty they look past in the world. Twain describes in great detail an experience he had on a river in a very literal way. Twain begins his passage by describing how, after being on the river, he had forgotten all of the things he felt, saw, and experienced the first time out on a steamboat in the river. After being out on the river so many times it just became routine and he states that, "All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river!" Through the first paragraph you begin to get an idea of how it feels to be on the river that first time. He continues to explain his experience but begins to question himself and everything that he had missed. By the end of the passage, the reader is left to question where the beauty has gone. The timing, or *kairos*, of this passage could be relevant to whenever it is read. Much like most of Mark Twain's literature works, "Two Ways of Seeing a River," is timeless. Rather it is 1883, when this was written, or in today's day and age, people behave the same. They go about their days only focusing on their own wants and needs, never taking in the beauty and wonder that is going on around them. He is able to apply his work to all types of people, no matter the gender, race, age, or the century in which they live. It is obvious that Mark Twain is well known because of his ability to write. This is the main part of the *ethos* in this story. Since he is renowned for his works, such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he is very credible. Another part that makes his trustworthy is the fact that he experienced this event himself. It might be questioned as to whether or not he was just writing a story from a fictional standpoint, but there is proof throughout the essay that shows he participated in the event. From the beginning, he presents the story in first

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person. Further evidence that he went through this lies in the following statement: “ All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. ” This quote shows that he is going very deeply into his mind. Not only does this statement reveal his inner self, but it provides physical evidence as to why it has to be him looking at this river. As his past writings reveal, Twain loves steamboats and because it mentions them in such a particular, technical way, he is providing signs to the reader that he is experiencing this. Because of his popularity and own knowledge, this particular essay is filled with ethos. The audience of this passage usually is people who are already familiar with Twain’s work and know how much feeling he puts in to it and they take him seriously. Through his really descriptive words, the reader is able to paint a picture of the river and begin to feel as if they were there. Since Twain is able to make such a connection with his audience they begin to ask themselves questions about how much they have missed in the world. The pathos, or emotional response to this passage, is really apparent. After reading it, people usually begin to look around and realize how much beauty they have failed to find in their daily lives. Something that Twain tries to point out is that even though you might have seen something beautiful once doesn’t mean there isn’t beauty in it all over again the next time you see it. His intent was so that the reader would walk away after reading this passage and see the world in a new way. While reading this passage the audience is able to relate and really feel how Mark Twain felt about the river. Logos, or the logical aspect of this essay, is that Mark Twain experienced it himself. If he made such a big bold statement of how people make the beauty disappear in the world without experiencing it

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firsthand, the reader might not take what he has to say to heart. Twain takes a well-known action, a doctor seeing a patient, and relates it to the point he is trying to make. Instead of seeing a doctor as helpful, Twain puts a new perspective on them by saying that they don't see the beauty in people but rather, they see the wrong and bad. By comparing his experience to an everyday thing that goes on he makes it more relatable. " Two Ways of Seeing a River, " by Mark Twain is a passage that people are left questioning themselves after reading it. Through kairos, ethos, pathos, and logos the reader is taken inside of a personal experience that Twain had. By reading about how he felt the first time he road down the river in a steamboat and how it slowly lost its beauty you begin to really feel like you were there with him. The reader is forced to ask themselves tough questions about how they go about their daily lives and how much beauty they miss out on. Rather it is Twain's peaceful and descriptive explanation of the river or the stab toward how doctors behave this passage in undoubtedly meant to change the way the reader sees the world. Even if you have seen something beautiful once doesn't mean that there isn't more beauty to find every time you see it after that. Make sure to stop and take in what really goes on around and you might be surprised what you find.