NAME:

Finding Rhetorical Appeals in Nonfiction Writing

1. Define *ethos* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Define *logos* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Define *pathos* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Read both sides of the issue.
5. Pro’s Thesis/Claim:­­­­­ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Con’s Thesis/Claim: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. Highlight and label the best examples you can find for ethos, logos, and pathos in both articles.

PRO/CON: Should parents support the new school meal standards?

PRO: Fight efforts to water them down

WASHINGTON — As a new school year begins, American parents should enthusiastically join first lady Michelle Obama’s campaign for healthier school lunches. Her drive is based on sound nutritional science with the goal of healthier, happier kids.

The first lady has made improving childhood health through better eating and more exercise her signature issue.

That’s a wise choice, since childhood obesity reached epidemic proportions: In 2012, 1 in 3 American children were overweight or obese. Overweight children are at higher risk of developing a variety of ailments, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes that diminish their lives and cost our economy hundreds of billions of dollars a year.

One part of Obama’s overall program is the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. It’s an update to the national school lunch program, which has helped pay for school meals since 1946. More than 30 million students now participate, but the program hadn’t had a major overhaul in 15 years.

Making School Meals Healthier

Following recommendations of the Institute of Medicine, school meals are now supposed to contain fewer calories, less fat and salt, and more fruit, vegetables and whole grains. Most parents would agree these are admirable goals.

Less noticed than the menu changes are other parts of the new law that improve access to school meals for low-income and foster kids.

It’s important to note that the federal government only sets guidelines — local school systems create their own menus. And contrary to ridiculous rumors, nothing in the law prohibits bake sales or birthday cakes in the classroom.

Still, as should be expected when making big changes to a national program, there have been glitches. For instance, it turned out many high school athletes needed more protein than the guidelines allowed. The government responded by amending the regulations.

The vast majority of school systems are working with Washington to implement the changes — more than 90 percent are going along with the new guidelines. Studies show most kids have grown to like the new, healthier options.

But, just as with health care reform, there are those who, because of their beliefs or politics, prefer attacking the law to improving it. There have been efforts in Congress to waive the new nutritional standards for a year. Some nutrition advocates see the influence of junk-food sellers in the legislative efforts to stall or roll back the new standards.

Getting Kids To Go Along

It should be no surprise to any parent that kids resist healthy food. But, just as is true around the family dining room table, with sufficient time and encouragement, children can be persuaded to try new foods. Eventually, they come to enjoy them. School systems that phased the changes in slowly found greater student acceptance.

Organizations that work most intensively to promote good nutrition, such as the Food Research and Action Center, wholeheartedly support the new meal standards and are fighting efforts to water them down.

A congressional study from earlier this year found that the new standards were achieving the goal of better nutrition for kids. It blamed the problems of implementation on the speed and size of the changes.

The federal government has been contributing food and money to our schools to improve student nutrition for decades. Such aid is good for the kids, good for education and good for our country. Over the years, assistance has been extended to cover breakfast as well as lunch — and improved, such as in the mid-90s, the last time school meals were updated.

Obama’s campaign is just the latest effort to make sure our kids eat right at school. It deserves every parent’s support.

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ABOUT THE WRITER: William Rice is a policy specialist with Americans for Democratic Action (www.adaction.org), the nation’s oldest liberal advocacy organization.

CON: They aren't fit for public consumption

WASHINGTON — The main focus of the national school meal programs should be meeting students’ needs. But for that to happen, there must be recognition that parents — not the first lady or Congress — know what’s best for their children.

Unfortunately, the school meal standards that started to go into effect two years ago under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 ignore parents. Instead, the standards favor a federal government that thinks it knows everything.

Those who dare to speak against these standards have quickly felt the wrath of Michelle Obama and her fans in the administration.

It’s not just policymakers who have felt the anger of the first lady. The School Nutrition Association, representing more than 55,000 school nutrition experts, sent a letter to the first lady expressing “disappointment regarding your July 22nd comments disparaging school nutrition professionals.”

Program Has Excessive Restrictions

The new meal standards try to control every aspect of what’s served to children. They place severe restrictions on calories, nutritional content and portion sizes. Some schools have left the program, willing to sacrifice the massive amounts of money it offers in exchange for freedom from its excessive restrictions.

The assumption underlying these new standards is that the federal government must control nutritional policy in the schools. Our government seems to believe parents can’t be trusted to teach their children how to make dietary choices that meet their unique needs.

Proponents claim that parents need help because they can’t ensure their kids are eating properly at school. Of course, parents can’t know every single thing that their children eat at school, but this doesn’t mean parents haven’t provided their children with the necessary knowledge to make informed choices. But even assuming that schools need to limit food choices, this doesn’t justify federal control.

Parents concerned about the food provided to their children at school are much better off going to local officials to address these issues. They will generally get the chance to meet with the officials and have their voices heard.

Parents aren’t going to get very far trying to convince D.C. politicians about their specific concerns. Local officials who would like to help have their hands tied with these new standards because they don’t have the necessary flexibility to address many concerns.

If the new standards provided greater flexibility to states and local authorities, it would help officials better meet the needs of their students. Not only that, but it would also empower parents by giving them a greater say in the food provided through meal programs.

Government Ignores Complaints

The federal standards have encountered a lot of criticism from nutrition officials as well as students. The independent Government Accountability Office surveyed state nutrition officials. It found that local school food authorities had a slew of real-world concerns about the lunch standards, ranging from “increased plate waste” — bureaucrat speak for uneaten food — to the costs of meeting the new federal dietary code.

The School Nutrition Association has echoed these concerns. The National School Board Association cautioned, “School boards cannot ignore the higher costs and operational issues created by the rigid mandates of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.” The mandates are so excessive that some schools have reportedly raided their teaching budgets to cover the extra costs.

Worse, students are disgusted by the food provided to them. According to the GAO report, students in one district held a three-week boycott, refusing to eat school lunches. Students are posting their anger over the program using Twitter at “#ThanksMichelle.”

The first lady and other proponents of the standards have turned a deaf ear to the complaints. They’ve even opposed giving some financially struggling schools a one-year reprieve from complying with the standards. Nothing, it seems, not even the mounting evidence of the program’s failure, will be allowed to slow its implementation.

And that’s a shame. Washington always hungers for power, but these federal meal standards aren’t fit for public consumption. They need to be scrapped.

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