**Book VI, The Odyssey Notes and Rhetorical Analysis Essay Walkthrough (The Princess at the River)**

**Epic Simile**: A simile in an epic that takes up multiple lines, sometimes triggered by the words, “So… so…”

E.g. Book VI, lines 110-118, Nausikaa compared to the goddess Artemis

**Rhetorical analysis**: An essay that examines/explains why a persuasive piece is effective or not (does it persuade? Does it achieve its goal? What was the goal anyway?). Ethos, pathos, and logos guides analysis, so at least a body paragraph should be dedicated to EACH rhetorical appeal.

**Thesis for a rhetorical analysis:** State how effective the piece is, what the goal was, and why or why not was the piece effective (how does the author use ethos, pathos, and logos?)

Sample Thesis : Odysseus’ speech to Nausikaa in Book VI of *The Odyssey* is effective at persuading Nausikaa to trust and help him; (Leave some space here. Here is where you would mention how the author uses ethos, pathos, and logos, but for now, let’s write the body paragraphs first and add this when we know what we want to say).

Now, each of your body paragraphs would be about ethos, pathos, and logos. Note that there really is no limit on these types of essays; you do not have to stay within 10 lines or 26 lines.

This would be a sample paragraph analyzing pathos (1st body paragraph). It is very similar to a short answer paragraph, but with more analysis of tone, diction, symbolism or any other specialized information. Notice it is also much longer and more analytical (breaks down the smaller pieces of the quote more):

The strongest of the rhetorical appeals is his use of pathos; he is trying to arouse the feeling of sympathy in Nausikaa. is (Notice that we didn’t just say “He has good pathos.” We expanded upon it: how do we SPECIFICALLY know he uses pathos, e.g. what SPECIFIC feeling/belief is he trying to arouse/remind us of? (I.e., Sympathy)). For example, Odysseus explains that he had just spent “twenty days in the winedark sea, on the ever-lunging swell” and how “the terror of Storm left [him] stranded…with more blows yet to suffer” (lines 181-6). His emotional diction, such as “ever-lunging,” “stranded,” “terrors,” and “storm,” is packed with fearful undertones to build sympathy in the princess for the many trials he’s encountered on the open sea and his subsequent hopelessness. In addition, the dark, tumultuous imagery also creates sympathy because it shows all that this brave man has endured: “winedark seas,” “swell[s],” and “storm[s]” typically represent the unknown and danger, which Odysseus overcame but still would need help in recovering from. This clearly pulls at Nausikaa’s heartstrings, as she notes he indeed is a “castaway” and she “must take care of him,” thus showing Odysseus’ skillful use of pathos.

Now that we know what we want to say about pathos, we need to add that aspect to the thesis (the addition is highlighted in yellow):

Sample Thesis : Odysseus’ speech to Nausikaa in Book VI of *The Odyssey* is effective at persuading Nausikaa to trust and help him; using pathos to stir empathy for his trials, (We will add logos and ethos here in a bit after writing the corresponding body paragraphs, the same way we wrote the pathos paragraph first).

Now, let’s write the body paragraph that examines ethos (you don’t have to go in order; you can put your weakest paragraph here. It just so happened that we chose to write about ethos next.):

To balance out strong use of pathos, Odysseus also adds a healthy dose of ethos by showing how humble and respectful he is (Notice that we didn’t just say “He has good ethos.” We expanded upon it: how do we SPECIFICALLY know he has ethos, e.g. we can trust him because he’s respectful and humble). After comparing Nausikaa to a remarkable tree he saw at the altar of Apollo, he says, “So now, my lady, I stand in awe so great I cannot take your knees” (lines 180-1). This shows humility because as Odysseus is unclothed, he takes special care not to overwhelm the princess, showing great restraint even though he clearly needs her assistance; some may feel entitled to be helped in this situation, but he does not. In saying this, he also shows respect for the Greek custom of hospitality by not immediately presuming Nausikaa will help him. He takes about 27 lines to actually make his request, and even then, it is courteous, only asking for minimal “rag[s]…some cloth…that you bought along” (192-3). In other words, he does not expect her to go out of her way to assist him; he only asks that she lend whatever she happens to have on hand. Thus, his humbleness and respect go a long way to establish Odysseus’ good character, which is ultimately noticed by the princess.

Now that we know what we want to say about ethos, we need to add that aspect to the thesis (the addition is highlighted in yellow):

Sample Thesis : Odysseus’ speech to Nausikaa in Book VI of *The Odyssey* is effective at persuading Nausikaa to trust and help him; using pathos to stir empathy for his trials, ethos to establish his excellent morality, (We will add logos here in a bit after writing the corresponding body paragraph, the same way we wrote the pathos and then ethos paragraphs first).

Now, let’s write the body paragraph that examines logos:

Finally, Odysseus appeals to Nausikaa’s sense of logic, mostly focusing on the concept of hospitality. *Xenia* is a term that defines the Greek set of expectations concerning the treatment of strangers and travelers; to the Greeks, this was instilled in every sense of their minds, so naturally this could be considered logic to them. Odysseus uses this to his advantage by telling Nausikaa that if she helps him, “may the gods accomplish [her] desire: a home, a husband, and harmonious converse with him” (lines 194-6). This shows a possible cause-effect in Nausikaa’s future actions: if she applies the concept of *xenia* to Odysseus, she will be rewarded. His simple yet effective logos would have succeeded on any Greek person at that time—it was that fundamental a concept to the ancient world.

Now that we know what we want to say about logos, we need to add that aspect to the thesis (the addition is highlighted in yellow):

Sample Thesis : Odysseus’ speech to Nausikaa in Book VI of *The Odyssey* is effective at persuading Nausikaa to trust and help him; he uses pathos to stir empathy for his trials, ethos to establish his excellent morality, and logos to efficiently get his message across. (Notice we had to change the participial phrase in the end result because it didn’t make sense to use it anymore).

And now, you’re done! You would need to restate the thesis as a conclusion, but that is mostly it! Here’s what it looks like altogether:

Odysseus’ speech to Nausikaa in Book VI of *The Odyssey* is effective at persuading Nausikaa to trust and help him; he uses pathos to stir empathy for his trials, ethos to establish his excellent morality, and logos to efficiently get his message across.

The strongest of the rhetorical appeals is his use of pathos; he is trying to arouse the feeling of sympathy in Nausikaa. For example, Odysseus explains that he had just spent “twenty days in the winedark sea, on the ever-lunging swell” and how “the terror of Storm left [him] stranded…with more blows yet to suffer” (lines 181-6). His emotional diction, such as “ever-lunging,” “stranded,” “terrors,” and “storm,” is packed with fearful undertones to build sympathy in the princess for the many trials he’s encountered on the open sea and his subsequent hopelessness. In addition, the dark, tumultuous imagery also creates sympathy because it shows all that this brave man has endured: “winedark seas,” “swell[s],” and “storm[s]” typically represent the unknown and danger, which Odysseus overcame but still would need help in recovering from. This clearly pulls at Nausikaa’s heartstrings, as she notes he indeed is a “castaway” and she “must take care of him,” thus showing Odysseus’ skillful use of pathos.

To balance out strong use of pathos, Odysseus also adds a healthy dose of ethos by showing how humble and respectful he is. After comparing Nausikaa to a remarkable tree he saw at the altar of Apollo, he says, “So now, my lady, I stand in awe so great I cannot take your knees” (lines 180-1). This shows humility because as Odysseus is unclothed, he takes special care not to overwhelm the princess, showing great restraint even though he clearly needs her assistance; some may feel entitled to be helped in this situation, but he does not. In saying this, he also shows respect for the Greek custom of hospitality by not immediately presuming Nausikaa will help him. He takes about 27 lines to actually make his request, and even then, it is courteous, only asking for minimal “rag[s]…some cloth…that you bought along” (192-3). In other words, he does not expect her to go out of her way to assist him; he only asks that she lend whatever she happens to have on hand. Thus, his humbleness and respect go a long way to establish Odysseus’ good character, which is ultimately noticed by the princess.

Finally, Odysseus appeals to Nausikaa’s sense of logic, mostly focusing on the concept of hospitality. *Xenia* is a term that defines the Greek set of expectations concerning the treatment of strangers and travelers; to the Greeks, this was instilled in every sense of their minds, so naturally this could be considered logic to them. Odysseus uses this to his advantage by telling Nausikaa that if she helps him, “may the gods accomplish [her] desire: a home, a husband, and harmonious converse with him” (lines 194-6). This shows a possible cause-effect in Nausikaa’s future actions: if she applies the concept of *xenia* to Odysseus, she will be rewarded. His simple yet effective logos would have succeeded on any Greek person at that time—it was that fundamental a concept to the ancient world, and is no less fundamental to Nausikaa herself.

Using logical reasons that were basic to any Greek mind, revealing humble and respectful character, and creating feelings of empathy, Odysseus, the great strategist, succeeds in persuading the princess of the Phaiakians to aid him.