

Exercise walk-through

Components of the rhetorical situation ■ 1.1

eXercise

You must be able to

- name the components: **exigence** 触发事件, **audience** 受众, **purpose** 目的, **writer** 作者, **context** 语境, **message** 讯息
- identify each component from a short passage or headnote
- explain how a change in one component changes the others
- avoid describing a device without linking it to purpose

Method — The six components

Exigence is the situation that makes writing necessary now. **Purpose** is what the writer wants to happen. **Audience** is who is addressed. **Writer** is the persona and standing being projected. **Context** is the surrounding circumstances the reader shares. **Message** is what is actually claimed.

Method — Reading a headnote

An AP headnote is not decoration. “Delivered to the graduating class of a medical school in 1974” gives you audience, occasion and probable purpose before you read a word of the passage.

Method — Why the components interact

Change the audience and the evidence that will persuade changes with it. A claim addressed to specialists may be stated technically; the same claim for a general audience needs a comparison. So a device is always a choice **for** somebody.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Name four components of the rhetorical situation.

Solution 2.1

Method: The six components

Worked steps

any four of: exigence, audience, purpose, writer, context, message **B2**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain the difference between exigence and purpose.

Solution 2.2

Method: The six components

Worked steps

exigence is the situation that makes writing necessary now **B1**; purpose is what the writer wants to happen as a result **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A letter is written by a hospital director to local residents after a service closure is announced.

- (a) State the exigence.
- (b) State one way the audience shapes the likely evidence.

Solution 2.3

Worked steps

(a) the announced closure of the service **B1**. (b) residents need consequences for their own care explained, so the evidence will be local and concrete rather than statistical **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A headnote reading “published in a national newspaper the week after a factory fire” supplies mainly

- A** the writer’s syntax
- B** exigence and context
- C** the thesis
- D** the line of reasoning

Solution 3.1

Method: Reading a headnote

- A the writer's syntax
- B exigence and context
- C the thesis
- D the line of reasoning



Worked steps

- B. it supplies the occasion and the surrounding circumstances.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A device analysis earns credit only when it is linked to

- A** the length of the sentence
- B** the writer's purpose and audience
- C** the number of examples
- D** the date of publication

Solution 3.2

- A** the length of the sentence
- B** the writer's purpose and audience 
- C** the number of examples
- D** the date of publication

Worked steps

- B.** an unlinked device is description, not analysis.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A speech is rewritten for a specialist conference instead of a public meeting.

- (a) State one change you would expect in the evidence.
- (b) Explain why the change follows from the rhetorical situation.

Solution 3.3

Method: Why the components interact

Worked steps

(a) more technical data and citation, less analogy **B1**. (b) specialists share the background knowledge **B1**, so evidence that would need translating for a general audience can be stated directly **B1**.