

1.1 Components of the rhetorical situation

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 17 marks

KEY WORDS message 讯息 • audience 受众 • purpose 目的 • exigence 触发事件 • writer 作者

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on the **rhetorical situation** 修辞情境.

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

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ 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.

■ 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.

■ 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.

2 Practice

2.1 Name four components of the rhetorical situation. [2]

2.2 Explain the difference between exigence and purpose. [2]

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

(a) State the exigence. [1]

(b) State one way the audience shapes the likely evidence. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A headnote reading “published in a national newspaper the week after a factory fire” supplies mainly [1]

A	B
C	D

A the writer’s syntax

B exigence and context

C the thesis

D the line of reasoning

3.2 A device analysis earns credit only when it is linked to [1]

A	B
C	D

A the length of the sentence

B the writer’s purpose and audience

C the number of examples

D the date of publication

- (a) State one change you would expect in the evidence. [1]
- (b) Explain why the change follows from the rhetorical situation. [2]

Read the situation carefully. Then write an essay that analyses the rhetorical choices the mayor makes to advance the argument.

Marked on the AP 6-point rubric: **Row A — Thesis (1), Row B — Evidence and Commentary (4), Row C — Sophistication (1).**

[6]
