Essay 3: Rhetorical Analysis of a Speech

Overview: Now that you have a better understanding of the power of rhetoric to influence/convince a reader, we will look at the way rhetorical strategies are also used with speech. The purpose of this assignment is to listen to a speech that presents an argument, just like we did for analyzing an article, and analyze the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of this argument.

Prompt: For this assignment, you will watch

* Pamela Meyer’s Ted talk, titled “How to Spot a Liar.”
* Nancy Duarte’s Ted talk, titled “The Secret Structure of Great Talks.”
* Karen Thompson’s Ted talks, titled “What Fear Can Teach Us.”
* Please watch all of these TedTalks online. Copy and Paste the title into the search bar, and you will locate the videos.

Then, you will write an essay in which you evaluate the **ONE** of the speaker’s arguments. This, of course, does **NOT mean that you should agree or disagree with the speaker***;*instead, you will provide a **deep analysis of the rhetorical strategies** the speaker uses to convince his specified audience of his point.

You will need to restate his thesis/argument in your own words, identify his targeted audience, and show how he or she did an effective or ineffective job at convincing the audience. Identify the argument and audience in your introduction. Then, in your own thesis, state whether the presented argument is effective or not and spend the body paragraphs focusing on the different strategies and how they are being used.

**You are analyzing the way the author presented his or her argument to determine whether it is an effective or ineffective argument.**

In order to analyze the argument, you will consider the author’s use of:

* Appeals (pathos, logos, ethos)
* Assumptions
* Logical fallacies
* Tone
* Types/Strength of evidence
* Objectivity/Bias
* OR any other points we have discussed or you have encountered in the text

**Directions:**

You will need to (1) Point out any instances where the speaker used one of these elements by providing a quote from the speech, and (2) Comment on whether or not the speaker did so well/whether the use of this strategy contributed to effectiveness of his or her argument.

You do NOT have to address each of these elements, but you must pick a minimum of FIVE (5). Each of the five can be presented in its own separate paragraph or you may combine any as you see fit. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence that points back to the thesis.

**Requirements:**

* Length: 3-5 pages
* Your essay must include:

1. Introduction, including a hook, background information, the author’s thesis and his audience and your thesis with a clear preview of points

2. Up to 5 body paragraphs, including cited examples from the speech as well as your analysis of effectiveness after each citation

3. Conclusion with a clear restatement of the main points, thesis, and final argument.