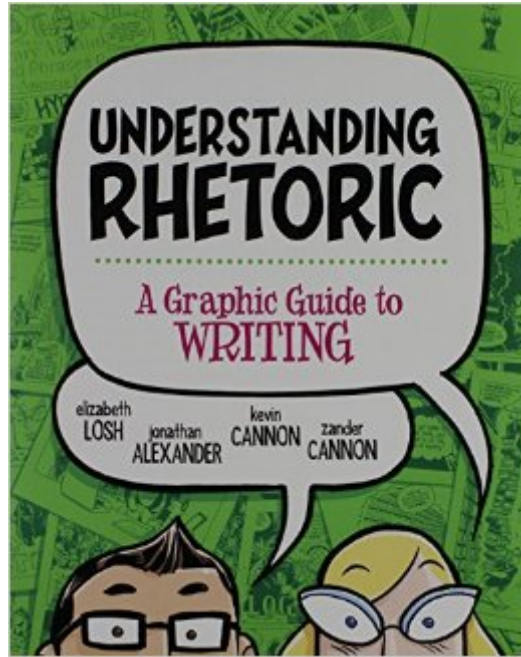


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Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide To Writing



Synopsis

This comics-style collaboration between rhetoricians Elizabeth Losh and Jonathan Alexander and illustrator team Big Time Attic presents the content of the composition course in a form designed to draw students in. *Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide to Writing* covers what first-year college writers need to know about the writing process, critical analysis, argument, research, revision, and presentation in a visual format that brings rhetorical concepts to life through examples ranging from Aristotle to YouTube.

Book Information

Series: A Graphic Guide to Writing

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Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (35 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #25,956 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #86 in Books > Reference > Words, Language & Grammar > Rhetoric #4097 in Books > Textbooks

Customer Reviews

I've been teaching writing to college freshmen and secondary students for years. *Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide to Writing* gets the Pioneer Award for the first text to use a graphic visual format to reinforce how to write well. The authors and artists put to work their own collaborative processes to create a text that will both educate and entertain young readers. The expert comic visuals support the topics in ways that will really appeal to visual learners. I can still recall the fussy face and piqued posture of Plato as he laments the ill effects that he believes writing will have on thinking and rhetoric. Students will gain a clear understanding of rhetoric, the writing process, and how to persuade an audience through essay writing. The book is a solid classroom text that offers ancillaries, creative assignments, and online helps for both students and instructors. Sure hope the authors will post a "Take a Look Inside" as that option will really attract sales. Selling the book to some might be tricky though. I will be using the text with a group of seniors in a conservative Christian school setting. In a chapter or two, the authors made the choice to use topics of same

gender marriage and research on the gay gene. When covering legitimate research, a fake website called "Savior Science" is used as an example of what is not a reliable source. Jonathan's sexual preference and human rights work are made clear at certain points in the text. I could wish that these weren't there, but I think discussing author choices is important to understanding the effect of the written word. Dialogue will ensue for sure and that's a good thing, especially for young Christians who are learning how to read, think, write and speak sensitively.

While the use of graphic narratives in higher education is far from a new development, this book attempts to claim the medium for Rhetoric and Composition. By no means an exhaustive exploration into the history of rhetoric and associated fields, the book serves to introduce basic writers (primarily college freshmen) to the fundamental aspects of writing. This book is quickly-paced and engaging and can be read cover-to-cover with very little effort. The authors present a lively view of the material that is both insightful and humorous. While this book is an excellent alternative to traditional, text-heavy composition books, *Understanding Rhetoric* does not live up to the hype. As a Master's student in Rhetoric and Composition, with a focus on graphic fiction, I was excited to see an attempt to present writing instruction in a different format. However, this book does not live up to the precedent set by books like Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*. *Understanding Rhetoric* takes a novel approach to an often despised topic but does not make the most of the medium. Very often the pages feel cluttered and disorganized and the reader finds it difficult to trace a logical path through the text bubbles, which is problematic when the reader is a comic book person! Another issue with the text is that the authors pick up on contemporary issues or hint at deeper understandings without fully explicating the reason. Because all texts are situated, it is unfair to discount the book because it sets itself in a very specific time, but I feel that the examples included will become dated very quickly and *Understanding Rhetoric* will not age very well. The text is aware of what makes it different and constantly stumbles right as it builds some momentum.

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