

Name

Date

Hour

I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King Jr.

Analyzing Author's use of Rhetoric

Fill out the chart by citing text from the speech, identifying which rhetorical device is being used, and explaining the impact the words have on the meaning of the text.



Analyzing the Text

1. The central point of an argument is the claim, or proposition. What is King's claim in this speech? What evidence does he cite to support his claim?

2. What did the Emancipation Proclamation serve as?

3. One hundred years later, what are some of the problems King references?

Text	Rhetorical Device	Purpose

4. What other seminal U.S. documents does King cite in his speech? Explain how these allusions advance King's speech.

5. An **extended metaphor** is a comparison between two unlike things that is explored in some depth. In lines 17-31 notice the extended metaphor King uses. What is the metaphor and meaning of this metaphor?

6. Find examples of parallelism in lines 36-41. What effect does the parallel structure create? What point is King emphasizing?

7. Cite the repeated phrase in lines 70-80. What effect does this repetition have?

8. King describes segregation as a dark and depressing valley. How might a desolate person feel?

9. King beseeches activists not to allow the nonviolent protests to become violent. Why does King not want the creative protests to degenerate?

10. King explains that many white Americans realize their freedom is tied to the freedom of African Americans. How are the freedoms of white and black Americans inextricably bound?

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11. King uses parallelism in lines 83-85, lines 89-91, and 96-116. Explain what Kings use of parallelism and repetition in lines 89-91 emphasize.

12. What tone is apparent in the most famous section of King's speech, in which he repeats "I have a dream." How does this tone affect the meaning of the speech?

12. In lines 120-131, what "faith" is King referring to?

13. Why do you think King's "I Have a Dream" speech is remembered as one of the most significant speeches in American history? Explain what makes the speech memorable and how it contributes to the ideal of an American society.