



Full Artifact Analysis

Persuasion & Influence · Tier 3 · Capstone — instructor overview

Grades: 11–12 **Time:** project — 1–2 periods or take-home **Format:** individual written analysis

The capstone for the entire strand. Students produce a complete written analysis of a real-world persuasion artifact, reading it across all three layers and evaluating how it was built to work — and where it can be resisted.

WHAT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Select a substantial real artifact and gather evidence from it.
- Analyze it across appeal, architecture, and system, with textual evidence.
- Evaluate where the design is strongest and where it depends on a distortion.
- Identify concrete points of resistance and articulate a central thesis.

WHY IT MATTERS

This is the strand's culminating assessment: it asks students to read persuasion the way they read a text — for craft, structure, and intent — and to write a grounded argument about how it works. It applies the method rather than teaching a new concept, and pairs naturally with the Fluency Synthesis.

Use it after the Fluency Synthesis, or as the summative assessment for Tier 3 or the whole strand.

PACING

SEGMENT	TIME	WHAT HAPPENS
Select & gather	take-home or 15 min	Students choose an artifact and collect evidence.
Plan	15–20 min	Students use the Student pages to plan the three-layer analysis.
Draft	one period or take-home	Students write the full analysis.
Present	optional period	Students present; peers question using the prompts.

MATERIALS

The 3 Student pages per student. The analysis itself is written separately.



Full Artifact Analysis

Discussion guide — modular; assemble to fit your period

These blocks are timed so you can build a lesson from them: a single period, or a full unit day. Run the activity with an opener before and a debrief after — pick what fits.

TIME BUDGET — MIX AND MATCH

BLOCK	TIME	USE
Opener (before)	5–8 min	Pick one, below.
Activity	project — plan in 15–20 min, write separately	The student pages.
Debrief (after)	~5 min each	Pick 1–2 prompts.
Close	3 min	The takeaway.

Single period: opener + activity + one debrief + close. **Full lesson:** opener + activity + two or three debriefs + an extension.

BEFORE — THE OPENER (PICK ONE · 5–8 MIN)

FORMAT: think-pair-share or a quick hands-up. GOAL: surface what students already notice and pose the question. END RESULT: every student has committed to a prediction or named a real example you can return to in the debrief.

- **Predict.** Model the four required parts on one shared artifact before students pick their own.
- **From their world.** Have students name the artifact they'll analyze; check that each is substantial and multi-move.

THE ACTIVITY (BUDGET PROJECT — PLAN IN 15–20 MIN, WRITE SEPARATELY)

CONCRETE GOAL — STUDENTS CAN: produce an evidence-grounded analysis of a real artifact across all three layers, ending in a thesis.

AFTER — THE DEBRIEF (PICK 1–2 · ~5 MIN EACH)

FORMAT: whole-class; call on the examples students generated in the opener and activity. END RESULT: students can state the takeaway in their own words and back it with one concrete example from their own life or the activity.

- What is the artifact trying to get people to believe or do — and who benefits?
- Which single move does the most work, at which layer — and how can it be resisted?

CLOSE (3 MIN)

Have a few students state the takeaway in their own words: **You now read persuasion the way you read a text — for craft, structure, and intent.**



Full Artifact Analysis

Leading the discussion — pacing, redirects, and warm-ups

The previous page is the plan; this page is for running it. Budget the period from the total below, and keep the redirect moves handy — most discussions falter in one of these four ways.

DOES IT FIT THE PERIOD?

THIS IS A PROJECT, NOT A SINGLE LESSON. A planning period (~45 min): opener 6 + in-class planning 15–20 + share-out 5 + close 3. Students draft and write outside class; reserve a later period to debrief finished analyses.

WHEN DISCUSSION STALLS OR DERAILS

IF...	MOVE
Silence, or “I don’t know”	Shrink the question: “Just name the first thing you noticed.” Give 30 seconds of silent think-time, then call on a pair, not an individual.
One or two voices dominate	“Let’s hear from someone who hasn’t gone yet.” Run it as think-pair-share first, so every student has an answer ready to offer.
It turns personal or heated	Move the trial from the person to the message: “What in the text makes you say that?” Keep the claim on trial, never the classmate.
Answers stay on the surface	Push for evidence: “Where exactly — quote the line.” Then “What would change your mind?” to surface the reasoning underneath.

WARM-UP BANK (SWAP IN FOR ANY OPENER)

Interchangeable with the opener on the previous page. Vary them across a unit so the hook stays fresh.

- **Two-minute hunt.** Find one real example of today’s move on your phone right now; keep the best one for the debrief.
- **Steelman it.** What’s the most honest reason someone would use this technique? Persuasion isn’t always dishonest — name the legitimate version first.
- **Rate and defend.** Put one message on the board; everyone rates it 1–5 for how persuasive, then defends the spread of answers.
- **Odd one out.** Three short examples, one isn’t the move — which, and how can you tell?



Full Artifact Analysis

Facilitation, presentation prompts & rubric

ANTICIPATED STUDENT RESPONSES & MISCONCEPTIONS

- **Description instead of analysis.** Weak drafts summarize the artifact. Require claims about *how it works*, each tied to evidence.
- **Three lists again.** As in the synthesis — push cross-layer connections, not parallel inventories.
- **No evaluation.** Students stop at analysis. Require a judgment: where is it strongest, where does it depend on a distortion, where can it be resisted.
- **Unfair to counter-readings.** Strong analysis anticipates the artifact's defenders; have students name the best counter-reading and answer it.

DIFFERENTIATION & EXTENSIONS

Support: provide the planning pages as a scaffold and allow an oral analysis in place of an essay. **Stretch:** require a comparison of two artifacts, or a resistance piece — a counter-message that neutralizes the design. **Cross-curricular:** argumentative writing (W.11-12.1); rhetorical analysis; capstone/portfolio assessment.

ANSWER KEY — ACTIVITY

ITEM	SAMPLE RESPONSE
Appeals	<i>Identifies surface appeals with specific evidence from the artifact.</i>
Architecture	<i>Maps the sequence and shows how moves set up one another — not a list.</i>
System	<i>Situates it in its environment: distortions, manufactured consensus, incentives, beneficiaries.</i>
Evaluation	<i>Judges strongest design points and names concrete resistance.</i>
Evidence & reasoning	<i>Claims grounded in the artifact; valid reasoning; fair to counter-readings.</i>



Full Artifact Analysis

The assignment — read persuasion like a text

This is the capstone for everything in the strand. You've learned to hear an appeal, trace an architecture, and see a system. Now you'll do all of it, in writing, about one real thing: choose a substantial persuasion artifact — a political ad, a marketing campaign, a viral movement, a recruiting pitch — and produce a complete analysis of how it was built to work, and where it can be resisted.

WHAT A STRONG ANALYSIS DOES

It reads the artifact the way you'd analyze a piece of literature — for craft, structure, and intent — and makes an **argument** about how it works, backed by evidence from the artifact itself. Four things it must do:

1. Identify the appeals. The surface hooks — emotional, authority, social proof, identity — with specific evidence. **2. Map the architecture.** The sequence of moves and how each sets up the next; not a list, but a structure. **3. Situate it in a system.** The distortions it relies on, any manufactured consensus, the incentives behind it, and who benefits when the belief spreads. **4. Evaluate.** Where the design is strongest, where it depends on a distortion that wouldn't survive scrutiny, and — concretely — how someone could resist it or help others see it clearly.

WHAT MAKES IT COLLEGE-LEVEL

Two things separate a strong analysis from a book report. First, **cross-layer connections**: don't just list what's in each layer — show how a single appeal serves the architecture, and how the architecture serves the system. Second, **fairness to counter-readings**: name the best case a defender of the artifact would make, and answer it. End with a clear **thesis** — one sentence stating your central claim about how this artifact works.

Use the next pages to plan. Then write the full analysis separately.



Full Artifact Analysis

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read across: Appeals (Tier 1) · Architecture (Tier 2) · System (Tier 3) · then evaluate

THE ARTIFACT

What is it, where is it from, and what is it trying to get people to believe or do?

APPEALS — THE SURFACE MOVES

ARCHITECTURE — THE SEQUENCE

List the moves in order and how each sets up the next.



SYSTEM — THE ENVIRONMENT

What distortions, manufactured consensus, or repetition is at work across a population? Who benefits?

EVALUATION

Where is the design **strongest**? Where does it depend on a distortion that wouldn't survive scrutiny?

COUNTER-READING & RESISTANCE

What's the best case a defender would make — and your answer? How, specifically, could someone resist this artifact?

THESIS

In one sentence: what is your central claim about how this artifact works?
