

## **The Classical Approach to Finding Common Ground in Fighting Climate Change**

Language is a powerful tool for persuasion, education, and even manipulation. Without physical or monetary punishment, the only way to influence behavior is through reminding, persuading, and convincing individuals that pollution endangers not only humans but the entire ecological system. Effective rhetoric is essential in this fight, and the classical rhetorical structure—comprising *exordium*, *narratio*, *partitio*, *confirmatio*, *refutatio*, and *peroratio*—provides a strong foundation for communicating the urgency of climate change. Given the resistance from those with limited education or unwillingness to acknowledge pollution's consequences, the argument must be direct, structured, and even confrontational to drive action.

### ***Exordium***

Pollution is a significant threat to the ecological and socio-environmental systems that sustain humans, animals, and plants. As climate change accelerates, many species face imminent extinction. While some people adopt nihilism—viewing life as short and meant for enjoyment—others, including responsible individuals and organizations, strive to balance technological development with environmental conservation. The question remains: Can progress coexist with sustainability?

### ***Narratio***

A substantial portion of pollution originates from fuel-powered machines such as cars, trains, boats, and farming equipment. These are categorized as mobile sources. Another major contributor is stationary sources, including factories and power plants. While these industries enhance efficiency and accessibility, they also inflict severe ecological damage. The trade-off between development and sustainability remains difficult to resolve—pollution deteriorates air quality, directly harming human, animal, and plant life. In essence, short-term benefits come at the cost of long-term sustainability.

### ***Partitio***

At what point did humanity become insatiable, prioritizing self-preservation and economic gain over environmental responsibility? The ongoing destruction of animal species, vegetation, and human health should be enough to prompt action, yet many remain indifferent. The consequences of irresponsible consumption are evident in unchecked industrial production, persistent littering, and unsustainable technological growth. If this reckless approach continues, self-destruction is inevitable—especially given that humanity is not relocating to Mars anytime soon.

### ***Confirmatio***

Numerous studies confirm the harmful effects of pollution. According to Manisalidis et al. (2020), air pollution is strongly correlated with respiratory diseases and immune system

suppression. Conditions such as asthma, pneumonia, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases are aggravated by exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub>—a fine particulate matter produced by pollution that, once inhaled, remains in the human body indefinitely. The long-term impact of air pollution not only endangers individuals but also threatens public health on a global scale.

### ***Refutatio***

Critics of climate action present various counterarguments. Some argue that restricting technological development and mass production leads to economic inefficiencies and deadweight loss. Others believe that human ingenuity will eventually solve climate challenges—whether through alternative fuels or space colonization. Many individuals, overwhelmed by daily struggles, simply do not prioritize environmental concerns. Additionally, those who lack direct experience of climate-related disasters in tropical regions, the Arctic, or Antarctic may underestimate the urgency of the crisis. However, these dismissive attitudes—often held by individuals lacking education, empathy, and social responsibility—do not halt scientific progress in addressing climate change.

### ***Peroratio***

Combating climate change requires collective effort. Simple actions—such as reducing waste, minimizing vehicle use, curbing materialistic consumption, and investing in renewable energy—can mitigate environmental damage. A sustainable future depends on global cooperation and a commitment to responsible environmental practices.

### **The Use of Rhetoric in the Article**

This article primarily relies on logos to present rational arguments about climate change. Ethos and pathos are used sparingly because climate change is a well-established scientific issue that can be explained through logical reasoning. Furthermore, emotional appeals may be ineffective for individuals who lack first-hand experience of climate-related disasters.

Unlike political rhetoric, where competing interests shape arguments, this article uses classical rhetorical techniques to present a straightforward, factual discussion of climate change. As WRÓBEL (2015) explains, rhetoric has historically been used to shape public opinion and resolve disputes. Additionally, according to Caplan (1933), rhetoric has played a crucial role in education, demonstrating the power of language as a tool for communication and persuasion. When used with good intent, rhetoric can drive meaningful change.

## References

- Caplan, H. (1933). Classical Rhetoric and the Mediaeval Theory of Preaching. *Classical Philology*, 28(2), 73–96. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/264267>
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