

Ethical appeals have two sides: **audience values** and **author's credibility/character**.

1. AUDIENCE VALUES:

Why do you use it?

An author would use these because the audience already agrees with those values. Appealing to the audience's values creates a relationship between the speaker and the audience, and makes the audience more likely to relate what the speaker is saying, because it aligns with their values.

Examples:

Values (beliefs; things the audience cares about):

Patriotism	Justice	Dignity for all humankind
Tradition	Equality	Self-preservation

Ideologies (Social, religious or philosophical):

Christian values	Capitalism
Socialism	Feminism, etc.

These values can sometimes feel very close to emotions, but they are felt on a social level (as a group) rather than only on a personal level. When an author evokes the values that the audience cares about as a way to justify or support his or her argument, we classify that as ethos.

The audience will feel that the author is making an argument that is "right" (in the sense of moral "right"-ness, i.e., "My argument is based on values that matter to you. Therefore, you should accept my argument"). This first part of the definition of ethos, then, is focused on the audience's values.

2. AUTHOR'S CREDIBILITY & HIS OR HER CHARACTER:

A. Author's Credibility:

Why do you use it?

Credibility of the speaker/author is determined by his or her knowledge and expertise in the subject at hand. Generally, the more experienced & knowledgeable someone is on a subject, the more likely an audience is to trust them.

For example, if you are learning about Einstein's Theory of Relativity, would you rather learn from a professor of physics or a cousin who took two science classes in high school thirty years ago?

B. Author's Character:

Why do you use it?

This is different from credibility because it involves personal history and even personality traits. A person can be credible but if they have negative personality traits or a negative personal history (for example, if they are known to lie, or if they are rude, or if they litter), then the audience would be less likely to accept an argument coming from them.

How do you use ETHOS?

- Referring either directly or indirectly to the values that matter to the audience (so that the audience will trust the speaker).

- Using language, phrasing, imagery, or other writing styles that your audience can relate to (again, so that the audience is inclined to trust the speaker).
- Referring to your experience and/or authority with the topic (and therefore demonstrating your credibility).
- Referring to your own character & personal history (to make the audience relate to you or trust you).

When reading, you should always think about the author's credibility regarding the subject as well as his or her character.

Example: Let's say you are reading an article about abortion, and the author mentions that she has had an abortion.

That is an example of an ethical move because the author is creating credibility via anecdotal evidence and first person narrative.

In a rhetorical analysis project, it would be up to you, the analyzer, to point out this move and associate it with a rhetorical strategy.