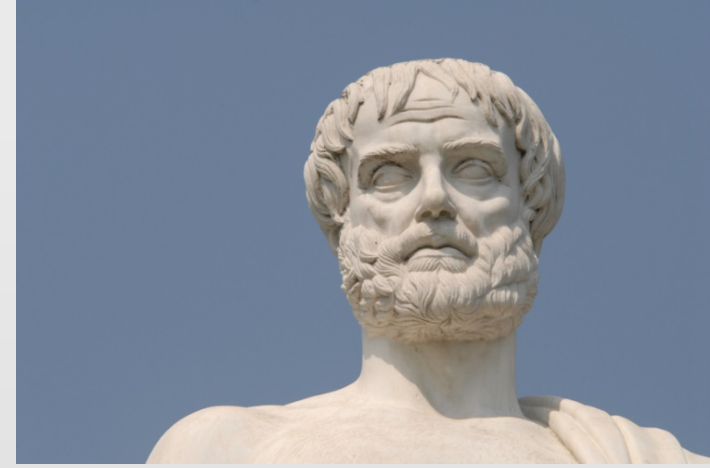
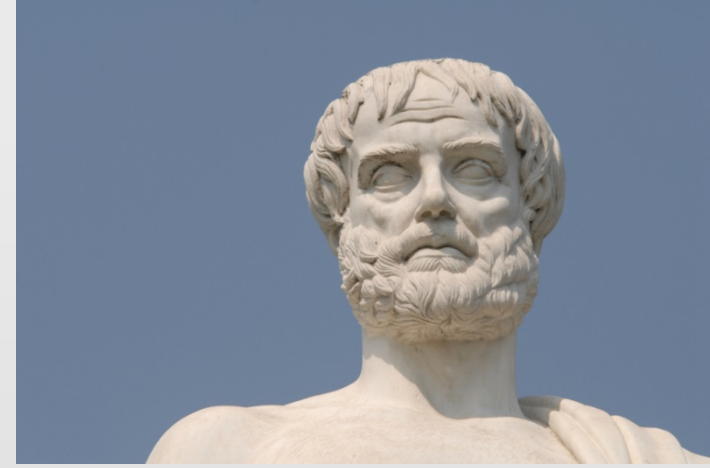


Aristotle
on
Persuasion

Aristotle

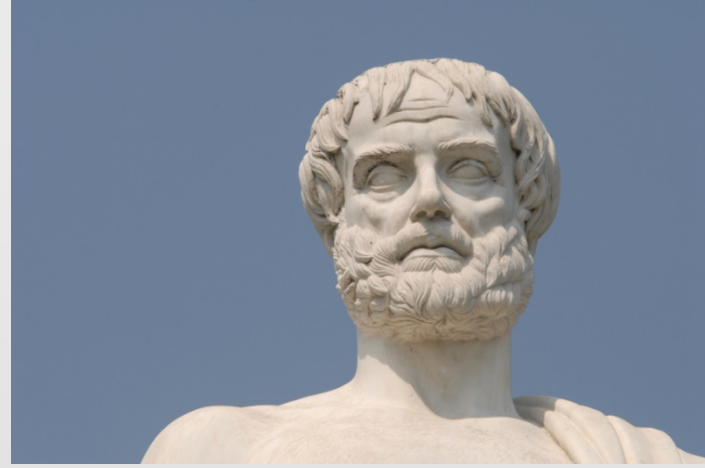
- 384 – 322 BC
- Born in Stagira, in the Chalcidice
- Son of a Physician in the service of the Macedonian court
- Moved to Athens in 367 to study at the Academy
- Left the Academy in 347
- Tutor of Alexander from 343
- Founded the Lyceum in 335



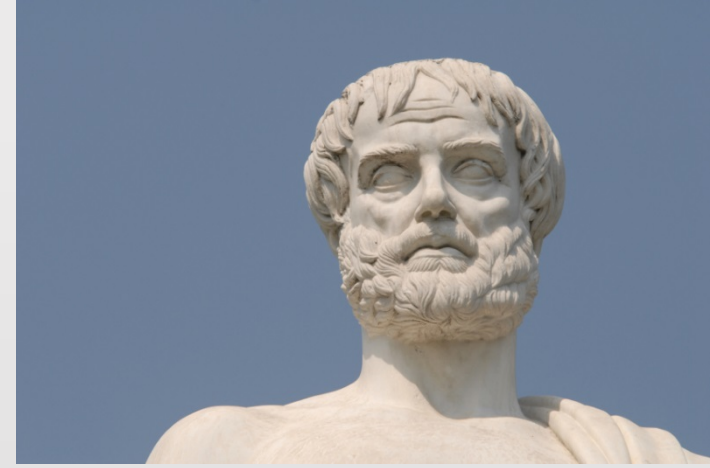


- We must be able to employ persuasion, just as strict reasoning can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it in both ways (for we must not make people believe what is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are, and that, if another man argues unfairly, we on our part may be able to refute him.
- –Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.12

Aristotle on Rhetoric



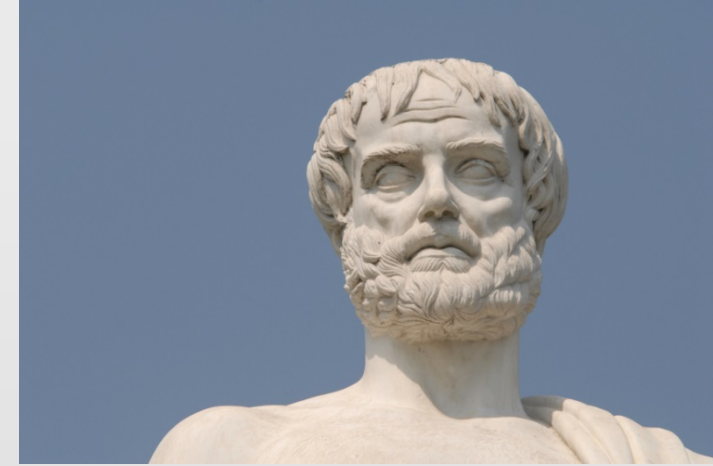
- Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing, in any given case, the available means of persuasion (*Rhetoric* 1.2)
- There are two modes:
 - 1. The available facts
 - 2. The argument
- –Only the argument is governed by Rhetoric



- Of the mode of persuasion governed by rhetoric there are three kinds: the character of the speaker; the opinion of the audience, and the persuasive argument as proof.
 - (*Rhetoric* 1.2)

Character of the Speaker:

No one will trust what you say if they do not trust you.

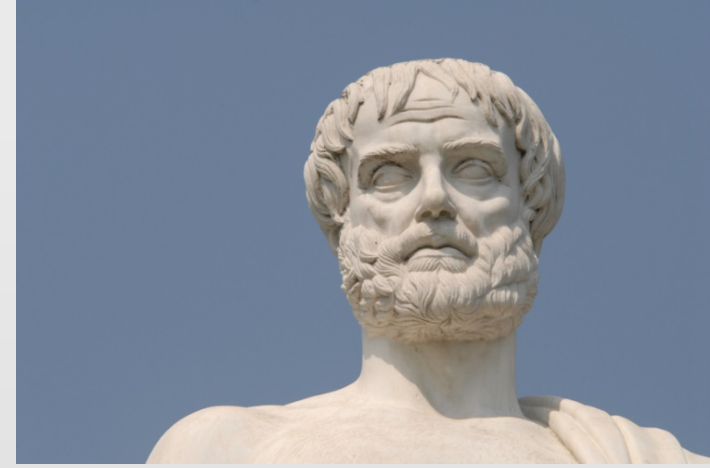


- Authority is a measure of other people's confidence in you.
- Establish confidence through...
 - Use of medium
 - Knowledge of subject
 - Verification of sources
 - Exploitation of other authorities

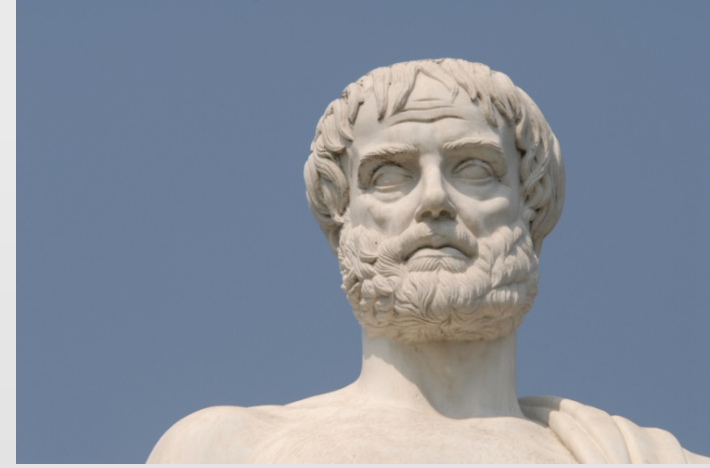
The Power of the Audience

- All arguments have the purpose of persuasion,
- All audiences are in the position of judges
- It is the audience, “that determines the argument’s end and object” (*Rhetoric* 1.3).

- “Meaning is in the hands of later users”
 - Dr. Julian Martin (From Latour, *Science in Action*)



The Persuasive Argument



- With regard to the persuasion achieved by proof or apparent proof: just as in dialectic there is induction on the one hand and syllogism or apparent syllogism on the other, so it is in rhetoric (*Rhetoric* 1.2.8).
- When we base the proof of a proposition on a number of similar cases, this is induction in dialectic, example in rhetoric (1.2.8).

Induction

- Proposition:
- Athens is safe from Persian invasion as long as Egypt is in revolt.

1. Irrefutable proposition

Darius did not invade Greece until he had subdued Egypt

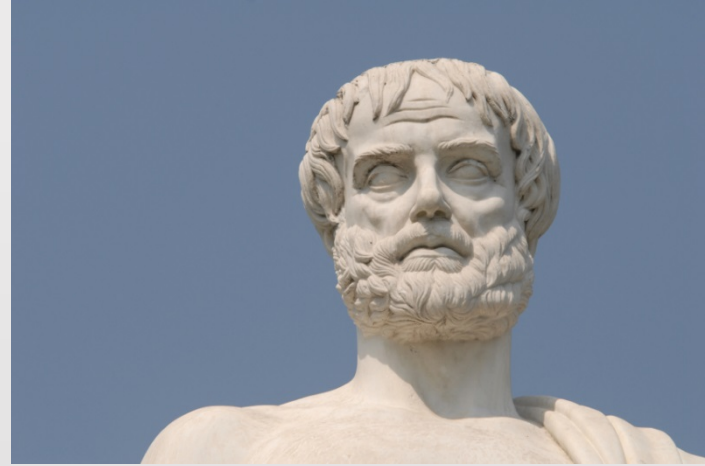
2. Irrefutable proposition

Xerxes did not invade Greece until he had subdued Egypt

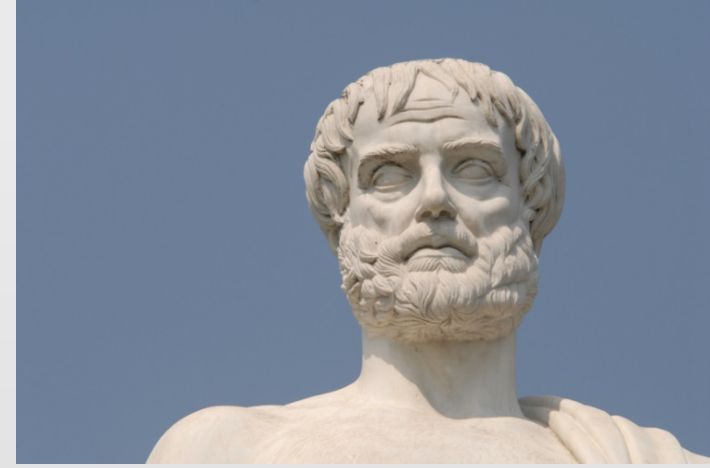
3. Refutable proposition derived as a result

The current king will not invade Greece if Egypt is in revolt.

(Rhetoric 1393a.32-1393b.4)



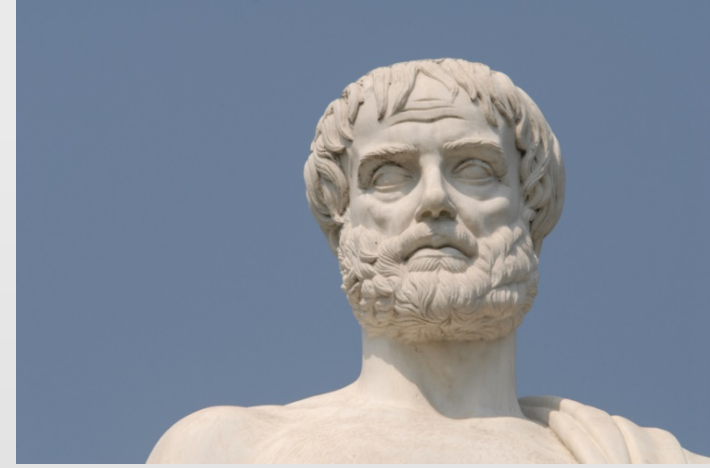
Syllogism



- “...when it is shown that, certain propositions being true, a further and quite distinct proposition must also be true in consequence, whether invariably or usually, this is called syllogism” (Rhetoric 1.2.8)
- Syllogism:
- If the Persians will not attack Greece unless they hold Egypt, then Athens should support rebellion in Egypt.

A Persuasive Essay

- Thesis Based
- Syllogistic
- Authoritative (character of the speaker)
- Source based
- Critical
- Comparative
- Replicable



General Tips

- Focus on a specific topic
- Assume a learned audience
- Avoid storytelling
- Maintain flow and organization
- Make your thesis overt
- You will be judged only on what you can be expected to discover

