

Section **D**

Techniques of Exploitation

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1. Appeal to Pity

Game Book Definition

“An attempt is made to secure our commitment by presenting the object of commitment as an object of sympathy, thereby arousing our sympathetic feelings to the point where these feelings determine favorable action.”

Expanded Definition

The speaker wants to gain your support by making you feel sorry for him or for someone else.

Example of Appeal to Pity for oneself

- a. Student to teacher: “Please don’t give me an F! If I bring that home I’ll be grounded for a month and might even lose my job. Please give me another chance!”

Comment: Why didn’t you think of the consequences *before* the test and study harder?

Example of Appeal to Pity for someone else

- b. Countless thousands are starving every day in the Neverlands of Australia. Send your money to save the hungry.

Comment: Why should I send money for this cause rather than hundreds of others that may be more deserving? How do I know the money will really help the starving?

Sometimes the ad or speaker really “lays it on thick,” adding emotional terms to the appeal.

Example of Appeal to Pity combined with emotional terms

- c. Look into the face of the Arctic fox. Isn’t this a beautiful animal? Look at the eyes. They sparkle with life and love. How would you feel to know that hours after this film was taken, this fox was butchered and skinned so that your wife could have that fur around her neck?

Comment: This appeal even throws in a guilt trip at the end.

In contrast to the previous example, Appeal to Pity can be subtle.

Example of subtle Appeal to Pity

- d. During the trial, the defense lawyers made sure that the defendant’s wife and children sat close to the jury every day.

Comment: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury! Think long and hard before sending my client to jail. Imagine what will happen to his lovely family.

A company may brag about its contribution to a worthy cause, implying that buying its product will allow them to continue to have pity on a needy group.

Example of indirect Appeal to Pity in an ad

- e. Coors Beer ad: “A message of hope from Rosalie, who just learned to read at age 48. Because literacy is priceless, Coors has contributed \$40 million to help America learn to read. Drink Coors.”

If the speaker gives a valid reason why an action that helps someone is necessary, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Appeal to Pity

- f. Judy, I know that you want to go to the movies with your friends, but you need to stay home tonight and watch your little brother. Dad and I have to go to Aunt Helen’s and help her out. She’s moving on Monday and needs help packing all her belongings.

Comment: This is not a general appeal for funds for a worthy cause directed to a mass audience. Aunt Helen faces a deadline and her niece, and her husband are the only ones (presumably) who can help her move.

- g. Dad, may I cut the grass tomorrow? I have an important math test tomorrow and an English term paper is due. I need the time to do schoolwork today.

Comment: The student gives solid reasons for not cutting the grass today. And the student is not trying to get out of the job altogether, just asking for a postponement.

Your Notes for Appeal to Pity

2. Appeal to Flattery

Game Book Definition

“An attempt is made to persuade us to buy or believe by flattering us on our personal appearance or in some other category where we excel or desire to excel.”

Expanded Definition

- The speaker tries to win you over by patting you on the back or “buttering you up.”
- The speaker wants you to have positive feelings toward him (because he flattered you) that you transfer to what he is saying.
- The listener is praised for his or her appearance, loyalty, good taste, intelligence, fairness, hard work, or any other positive trait.
- Put on the spot, the person receiving the compliment is more inclined to accept the offer.

Examples of Appeal to Flattery

- a. Form letter received through the mail: “Because you are one of our most valued customers, we are sending you for 10 days’ trial a new product we are introducing to the American market. If not satisfied, return after the trial period. If satisfied, kindly send payment.”

Comment: As a most valued customer, you wouldn’t be rude and turn down their offer, would you?

- b. Your taste in clothing is exceptional, young lady. It is a pleasure to wait on customers like you. Now try on this lovely blouse. It is somewhat expensive, but it matches your beautiful green eyes!

Comment: Good taste and beauty! How can you say no?

Appeal to Flattery does not have to entail purchasing a product.

Example of Appeal to Flattery that does not involve buying something

- c. Student to teacher: “Mr. Cheney, I’ve been thinking it over. I think your rule against chewing gum is a good rule after all. By the way, may I change seats with John?”

If the speaker states facts about the listener and then makes a request that flows from those facts, the answer is No Technique.

**Junior/
Senior
Only**

Example of No Technique rather than Appeal to Flattery

- d. Principal addressing the Honor Society members: “You are the academic leaders of our school. Our tradition here at East Clintwood High is to ask more of our leaders. That is why every year the Honor Society tutors students having trouble in their classes and why the Honor Society members organize a Quiz Bowl competition for schools in this area.”

Comment: Calling the Honor Society members “the academic leaders of the school” is stating a fact and not false praise. In that capacity, it is reasonable to ask members to help less successful students and to sponsor an academic competition.

Your Notes for Appeal to Flattery

3. Appeal to Ridicule

Game Book Definition

“The sergeant, on the first day of class, having made a certain statement, is asked an embarrassing question by a member of the class. Preferring a cheap victory to an honest discussion, the sergeant replies sarcastically, ‘I am afraid, Private Jones, that I cannot understand what you mean. You are too deep for me.’ He then goes on to the next questioner.

“An attempt is made to influence us to accept a certain proposition by poking fun at those who oppose the proposition.

“In the example cited above the impression will be left on the minds of the others that the questioner must have been talking nonsense, since it cannot otherwise be supposed that the sergeant was unable to understand the question. At least that is the impression the sergeant hopes to leave.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“The speaker or writer may attempt to reduce his opponent’s position to a humorous absurdity by ridiculing his opponent’s appearance, manner, background – anything. He may succeed in making his opponent look silly or foolish, but it is no substitute for answering the other party’s arguments.”

Expanded Definition

- The speaker does not try to win an argument with logic but rather by “putting down” the opponent or opposing idea.
- The ridicule often takes the form of sarcasm.

Examples of Appeal to Ridicule

- a. My worthy opponent says that he has gained valuable experience from his past campaigns. That’s true. He has gained a lot of experience – a lot of experience in losing.

Comment: You don’t want to vote for a loser. Even referring to “my *worthy* opponent” is sarcastic since the speaker obviously doesn’t consider the opponent a worthy adversary.

- b. Football coach to player: “Come on, Morgan. Tackle that man. You look like you’re trying out for the Ladies’ Powderpuff League.”

Comment: The coach tries to shame the player into doing better. However, the coach gives no constructive suggestion for tackling better.

Ridicule often appears in reviews of movies, plays, musical concerts, and other performances.

Example of Appeal to Ridicule in a review

- c. The movie critic for the local newspaper reported: “I found the new Harry Trotter movie to be enjoyable if you’re looking for a place to take a nap. The star, Elmer Smith, has the talent of a trained chimp and his co-star, Wilma Baker, has the grace of a sloth. The script is excellent for swatting flies.”

Comment: An Appeal to Flattery can “lay it on thick.” So can Ridicule. This review applies the ridicule with a thick brush in support of the proposition, “Don’t waste your money on this movie!”

As defined in the Game Book, *Appeal to Ridicule does not apply to just any ridiculous situation in an ad.* The use of humor (as, for example, in the Bud Light and Capital One TV commercials) is not exemplified in the Propaganda game unless the ad also employs one of the defined techniques as part of the humor.

There is no way that use of sarcasm and ridicule can be No Technique. (Not a single instance appears in over 400 Section **D** questions from past tournaments.)

Your Notes for Appeal to Ridicule

4. Appeal to Prestige

Game Book Definition

“An attempt is made to induce you to buy or believe by stating or suggesting that such action will secure or maintain prestige for you.

“Status and Appeal to Prestige, though related techniques, nevertheless represent quite different errors. In the former case it is suggested that if Jones, a person possessing or allegedly possessing status, buys or believes, so should you. There is *no* implication that your buying or believing will confer on you equivalent status. The Appeal to Prestige suggests that you should buy or believe because by so doing *you* will acquire or improve status.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“This appeal is often called the snob appeal. In their effort to cast a halo of exclusiveness, snobbishness, and high status around their brands, advertisers may picture what appear to be social leaders using the product, or the product being used at places frequented only by the rich or the aristocratic or the upper class, such as yacht clubs, fox hunts, luxury-hotel swimming pools and the like.”

Expanded Definition

- This technique appeals to people who need to be seen as more affluent, more important, more discriminating, more elegant, or more savvy in the ways of the world.

Examples of Appeal to Prestige

- a. Be the first kid on your block to play the new fun game Spaz!

Comment: You'll become the coolest kid in the neighborhood, the envy of your friends!

- b. From a letter: “The Board of Directors of the Smithsonian Institute, acting at a special meeting on February 4, has voted to extend to you an invitation to become a charter member of the Smithsonian Institute. Upon receipt of your acceptance and \$100 annual subscription, the Institute will release your name for publicity in area newspapers.”

Comment: For \$100, you can be one of the select group of 250,000 potential members who were sent this same letter.

Sometimes Appeal to Prestige is subtle.

Examples of subtle Appeal to Prestige

- c. Ad: “Walker milk – sold only at better food stores in your area.”

Comment: Buying Walker's will give you the distinction of shopping at the “better stores.”

- d. Ad: “Pearls ... irresistibly elegant ... the height of luxury. Considered more precious than gold. Mikimoto presents its exquisite collection at MB's Trunk Showing.”

Comment: The ad *implies* (without explicitly stating) that you will gain status if you own a Mikimoto creation. In Section **B**, this would be Emotional Terms.

Appeal to Prestige does not always occur in ads.

Example of Appeal to Prestige outside of ads

- e. Honey, we have to move into Horseshoe Acres now that you have joined the law firm. It's the most elegant development in our community. Just think what your bosses will think of you then. Your star will surely rise in the company.

Comment: The husband appeals to his wife's desire to achieve higher status at her new law firm.

If you have been selected to win an award or join an elite group without having to buy or pay for anything, the answer is No Technique.

Example of No Technique rather than Appeal to Prestige

- f. A phone call: "Congratulations, Dr. Heimlich! The Board of Directors of the National Academy of Science has selected you as one of this year's recipients of the Distinguished Scientist medal. All your expenses will be paid for your trip to Washington May 23 to receive the award at our annual banquet."

Comment: The speaker is not selling anything but rather offering an award that doesn't cost anything.

- g. Sports reporter: "Xavier Carter won four gold medals at the NCAA Track and Field Championship. That puts him in an elite group of only two men who have accomplished this remarkable feat. The other one? The great Jesse Owens in 1936."

Appeal to Prestige can be distinguished from Appeal to Flattery because the flatterer congratulates the listener for a trait the listener *presently* possesses. However, Appeal to Prestige is based on the listener's desire to *obtain* something in the *future* that they don't have now.

Example of Appeal to Flattery rather than Appeal to Prestige

- h. From a letter: "Style is a reflection of your personality, taste, and intelligence. Your success is reflected in your style. Keeping this in mind, we're proud to offer you the Executive Club Gold Card."

Comment: While possessing an Executive Club Gold Card may bring you prestige in the future, the letter tries to persuade you to sign up by praising the personality, taste, intelligence, success, and style you have now.

Example of Appeal to Prestige rather than Appeal to Flattery

- i. From a letter: "We invite you to join our exclusive Executive Club Gold Card so that you can reap the benefits of the many privileges available only to this select group."

Your Notes for Appeal to Prestige

5. Appeal to Prejudice

Game Book Definition

“The one who makes the appeal to prejudice attempts to persuade you to act or feel in a certain way by associating his person, product or proposal with a certain one or more of your prejudices, positive or negative – a prejudice being a prejudgment wrapped in emotion and having a history. Not only does he rekindle your prejudice, he also arouses in you warm feelings toward the one (himself) who apparently shares your prejudice. And so it becomes much easier to make you believe or buy whatever he has to offer.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

- “Many prejudices hang on the fact that people of like interests work more or less as a group and members of a group, particularly a long-standing one, have a favorable predisposition toward members of the group and an unfavorable bent toward non-members.”
- “We commonly think of prejudices as religious or racial. Yet one could have an anti-religious bias. There are national prejudices, geographical prejudices (North vs. South), and occupational prejudices (labor vs. management). Nor is prejudice necessarily based on such broad concerns. Even hobbies can warp our minds such that we tend to view with suspicion all those who do not share our interest in, say, stamp collecting.”

Expanded Definition

- The Prejudice category in Section **A** refers to prejudice on the part of the *speaker*. Appeal to Prejudice refers to the speaker’s attempt to play upon the prejudice of the *listener*.
- The listener can be prejudiced *for* someone or something as well as prejudiced *against* someone or something.
- Often the speaker *assumes* a bias on the part of the listener, especially when the speaker does not know the listener (for example, a salesperson talking to a potential customer or a speaker addressing a mixed audience).

Examples of Appeal to Prejudice for Something

- a. During a political campaign, a salesman made a point of wearing a Republican badge when calling on his Republican clients and a Democratic badge when calling on Democratic clients.

Comment: The salesman wants his clients to like *him* better and therefore be more likely to buy his products.

- b. José Rodriguez speaking to his boss, the head buyer: “Hey, Rafael, let’s think about this a bit. Hector Gonzalez sells a desk that is just about as good as the top company’s desk. You know, it took us a long time to get to this position of authority. We need to help the little guys, the minority vendors, like us. Let’s give the order to Hector.”

Comment: Notice the phrase “just about as good as the top company’s desk.” If José gives good reasons why Hector’s product is better, the answer would be No Technique.

Examples of Appeal to Prejudice against Something

- c. If you and Mr. Jones prefer this less expensive set, I’ll be happy to sell it to you. A lot of the poorer people are buying it.

Comment: The salesperson appeals to what he or she *assumes* is the Joneses prejudice against the poor.

- d. A: “Let’s not go to Riveters Beauty Salon any more.”
B: “Why is that?”
A: “They’ve hired an Iranian shampoo girl.”

Sometimes Appeal to Prejudice is subtle.

Examples of subtle Appeal to Prejudice

- e. Speaker addressing a meeting of the Conservative Club: “California’s overwhelmingly liberal Superior Court has gone far beyond the U.S. Supreme Court – at the expense of our children. We must work to get the liberal judges off the court.”

Comment: By using the “red flag” word “liberal,” the speaker appeals to the prejudice of the audience against liberals. The speaker does not discuss specific court rulings that he disagrees with but instead paints the court with the broad brush “overwhelmingly liberal.”

- f. We should have the party at Henry’s house. His mother is a stay-at-home mom. They always know some delicious party recipes.

Comment: The speaker presents a stereotype of the stay-at-home mom as someone who is a cooking expert. This thought is intended to feed into the audience’s presumed predisposition in favor of good food at a party.

If the speaker presents good reasons why a person or group should be treated in a special way, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Appeal to Prejudice

- g. Principal addressing the faculty: “We have a handicapped student, Henry Roberson, who is in a wheelchair. You must let him sit right inside the door of the classroom and appoint a student in each class to help Henry with his books and movement in and out of the classroom.”

Comment: The principal does not have to make a case for treating the wheelchair-bound student differently. His needs are obvious.

- h. I know that we are inconveniencing many innocent people who look like they are from the Middle East. But we must protect our country. We must check out anyone who looks as if he might be a terrorist.

Comment: The speaker cites national security as the justification for the policy.

Appeal to Prejudice must be distinguished from Appeal to Ridicule. When using Ridicule, the speaker perhaps betrays *his* prejudice against someone. By contrast, Appeal to Prejudice tries to capitalize on the bias of the *listener*.

Example of Appeal to Ridicule rather than Appeal to Prejudice

- i. Only uneducated, irresponsible idiots would vote for my opponent. Don't become one of those idiots. Be intelligent. Vote for me!

Comment: The candidate ridicules people who favor his opponent. He does not appeal to the prejudice of the voters. Presumably no one thinks of himself as an idiot.

Example of Appeal to Prejudice rather than Appeal to Ridicule

- j. With his small, country town background, he certainly could never run an entire state competently.

Comment: The speaker appeals to the bias of voters against a "country boy." He does not make a sarcastic remark or a joke about the candidate's small town background.

Your Notes for Appeal to Prejudice

6. Bargain Appeal

Game Book Definition

“An attempt is made to get you to buy by appealing to your desire to save money. If you buy without making your own comparison as to price, quality, and service, the technique is successful.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“Closing out sales, fire sales, lost-our-lease sales, and the like appeal to the bargain hunter. And there may be bargains, and the sales may be genuine. But it is quite possible that these promotions are cover ups for pushing off on the consuming public inferior merchandise brought in just for the sale and marked at low prices that nevertheless allow the seller a comfortable profit. ... Before you swallow the bait, you had better check elsewhere on price, quality, and service.”

Expanded Definition

- The appeal is to the listener’s assumed predisposition to save money. This is the *specific* consequence that will result from doing what the example suggests.
- Ads may embody Bargain Appeal by offering products on sale, allowing you to buy a second item at a reduced price, giving you a “free” gift when you purchase a certain amount, charging no fees for a membership card, and so on.

Examples of Bargain Appeal

- a. There’s no need to shop around wasting gas, time, and money. Come to us for all your needs at the very lowest prices in town! The lowest prices anywhere.

Comment: Maybe they don’t want you to waste time and gas shopping around because you’ll discover they *aren’t* offering the lowest prices.

- b. You can’t lose when you buy your furniture at Keshman’s. If you find any item advertised for less anywhere else, we’ll pay you back the difference between our price and theirs.

Comment: This sounds solid. However, before you put No Technique, ask yourself: should I take their word that they will pay me back the difference between their price and another store’s price? Unless I consult satisfied Keshman’s customers or the Better Business Bureau to verify that the store keeps its promise, I am falling for Bargain Appeal.

- c. From a letter sent to people across the nation: “Use the Executive Club Gold Card and pay no annual fee.”
- d. If you like pan pizza, you’ll just love our popular half price deal. Buy one large pan pizza for the regular price, and get a second pizza for half price.

Sometimes the Bargain Appeal is indirect.

Example of indirect Bargain Appeal

- e. You can quickly conquer your oil mileage problems with Sun Glow Supreme. It’ll give you the most mileage of all premium oils.

Comment: You'll save money by paying less for gas because of the better mileage you (allegedly) will get with Sun Glow oil.

If a buyer compares offerings and determines that a certain option is the best available, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Bargain Appeal

- f. All four bids are alike in every respect except one – cost. Since all bidders are equally reputable, we'll award the contract to the company whose cost is lowest.

Comment: You can't argue against this logic. Presumably the reputations of the bidders have all been checked.

- g. This new Buick Regency may sound like a plush automobile, but it fits my budget, I like its roominess, and it has a good repair record. I'm going to buy it.

Comment: Lowest price isn't the only consideration. This car's price is within the range the buyer can afford, and the Regency has appealing assets.

If a seller invites you to compare prices to verify that their offer is the best or offers evidence from comparison studies showing the product is cheapest, answer No Technique. The same applies if a shopper purchases an item after investigating prices at various stores.

More Examples of No Technique rather than Bargain Appeal

- h. We think that the merchandise we are showing is the highest quality around, and our prices are right. We invite you to compare our products and prices with any other store in town.

Comment: This salesperson is not pressuring you to make an immediate decision. If you check other outlets and find that this deal is the best for you, you'll come back and buy.

- i. The quality of both these pieces of material is about the same, but A's is 4 cents per yard cheaper than B's. Unless you can think of a better reason, let's buy A's.

Your Notes for Bargain Appeal

7. Folksy Appeal

Game Book Definition

“The user of this device places himself or his product on a level of neighborly intimacy with the reader or listener. The Folksy Appeal combines elements of Appearance and Manner.”

Expanded Definition

- The speaker tries to convince you he is “one of the guys,” a real “member of the family” or at least a neighbor.
- The approach is informal, with a “personal touch.”
- The goal is to make you feel at ease with the speaker or company.

Examples of Folksy Appeal

- a. Channel 8, your neighborhood station.

Comment: Unless you live within a few blocks of the station, they aren’t really your neighbors. But you can count on them as you do your real neighbors.

- b. Come on over to Used Car Heaven. Friendly people will help choose the right car for you. Come join our family of customers.

Comment: “Friendly” better mean lower prices and improved service if they want me to join their “family.”

One variation of Folksy Appeal focuses your attention on a particular employee as an example of the “plain hard working folks.”

Example of Folksy Appeal that focuses on a particular person

- c. Ad showing a picture of Jeff King: “Planning for your financial future means looking at your needs from every perspective. So let Financial Representative Jeff King put the Northwestern Mutual Financial Network to work for you. Jeff will work with you like one of your own employees. He will get to know your operation so that you can feel comfortable with the strategies he recommends.”

Comment: Try to find another company with a Jeff King!

A slightly different approach is to offer you assistance in finding just the right product for you and/or your family.

Example of Folksy Appeal that offers individual attention

- d. Are you tired of all the red tape and hassle that goes along with purchasing a new automobile? Come to Bill Edsel’s Chevrolet where our courteous sales people will help you find just the right car for you.

Comment: Take all the time you need! Our staff will work with you no matter how long it takes. You won’t find such patience anywhere else.

Sometimes Folksy Appeal is embedded in a slogan.

Example of Folksy Appeal in a slogan

- e. Ad: “Fly the friendly skies of United.”

Comment: This example embodies two techniques. In Section C, the answer is Slogans. In D, it is Folksy Appeal.

Politicians can’t resist Folksy Appeal. A candidate wants voters to know that he or she is “one of them” with the same problems and concerns.

Example of Folksy Appeal in politics

- f. Political speaker: “His hobbies show what a regular guy our candidate is. A lot of people have expensive hobbies, but his are simple and down to earth. He likes to go to the kitchen and cook up a tasty meal for his friends. Even the things he cooks are a clue to the kind of man he is. Nothing fancy – just good honest American food.”

Comment: We’re not electing him to be our cook. Where does he stand on the issues?

Folksy Appeal can resemble Appeal to Pity. Appeal to Pity presents a person or group as the object of sympathy. Folksy Appeal presents a person as just like you. If the goal of putting the person on an intimate level with you is to obtain your sympathy, the answer is Appeal to Pity. If the goal is to make you comfortable so you’ll be more likely to buy, the answer is Folksy Appeal. *Competition examples for Elementary/Middle Divisions should avoid combining the two.*

Example combining Folksy Appeal and Appeal to Pity

- g. From Richard Nixon’s “Checkers speech” on national TV after he was accused of wrongdoing while running for vice-president: “It isn’t very much. But Pat and I have the satisfaction that every dime we have got is honestly ours. I should say this, that Pat doesn’t have a mink coat. But she does have a respectable Republican cloth coat, and I always tell her that she would look good in anything.”

Comment: He asks voters for pity so he won’t lose his spot on the ballot. However, he also depicts himself and his wife as ordinary folks.

If the speaker is a friend or merely offers an opinion without pressuring the listener to follow it, answer No Technique.

Example of No Technique rather than Folksy Appeal

- h. Sue, I’ve been your friend since childhood. We’ve shared many good times. Our children have grown up together. You’re overwhelmed by your professional and personal responsibilities. You should seriously consider quitting your job.

Comment: The speaker really is a friend and tells Sue only to “seriously consider” quitting her job. Even if she said, “You should quit your job,” this would still be No Technique. The friend gains nothing for herself by offering this advice. Elementary players would be helped if the last sentence were worded, “I think you should seriously consider quitting your job.”

Your Notes for Folksy Appeal

8. Join the Bandwagon Appeal

Game Book Definition

“An effort is made to influence you to act in a certain way by asserting or implying that that is what is popular or what the majority is doing.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“Many times this appeal is based on a deception. The speaker or writer is very definitely *in the minority*, but he hopes to make you think that he or his product is popular. Of course, even if a product is purchased by the majority, that is no indication that it would meet your specific individual needs.”

Expanded Definition

- The title of this category refers to the time a century ago when the circus came to town. The wagon carrying the band rode through the town to attract attention and create interest. People, especially children, were encouraged to “join the bandwagon” and follow it to the circus.
- So this approach asks you to act a certain way because that is the “in” thing to do. “Everybody’s doing it!” “Join the crowd and be happy and secure!”
- If so many people are buying it, watching it, doing it, then it must be good.

Examples of Join the Bandwagon Appeal

- a. Everywhere I look I see maxi-coats this winter. Dad, I’ve just GOT to have one.

Comment: Dad, you don’t want your beloved daughter to be the *only* girl in school without a maxi-coat, do you?

- b. Man to his wife in bookstore: “This book has sold a million copies. Let’s buy it and we’ll both read it.”

Comment: This is similar to Numbers (Section C). However, just because a book is a best seller, that doesn’t mean that *you* will enjoy it.

TV ads employ a variation of Join the Bandwagon Appeal when they brag about “the new hit show,” “#1 in news in the metro area,” and so on.

Example of Join the Bandwagon Appeal in a TV ad

- c. Ad: “Watch Jane Pauley and Stone Phillips on NBC, America’s News Leader.”

Comment: “America’s News Leader” implies that NBC is the popular network for news. And, of course, if NBC is the most-watched news source, then it must be the best. Get on board!

Another form of Bandwagon Appeal claims that only a few places or seats are left for a trip, concert, game, and so on.

Example of Join the Bandwagon Appeal in the form of limited space available

- d. Ad: "February's family ski trip to Italy is nearly sold out. Only a few spots are left. You better call the Ski Club this weekend and get in on the fun."

If an example simply states facts about a product's success, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Join the Bandwagon Appeal

- e. Six out of ten viewers in our city who watch television at 6 p.m. watch the Channel 4 news.

Comment: There is no indication that this is an ad for Channel 4. It may be a statement in an independent report on TV ratings in the area or in a newspaper article about the report.

- f. I have just finished reading John Grisham's book *The Firm* that has been the number one seller for three weeks now. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Would you like to borrow it?

Comment: This is not a sales pitch. It is just an offer from a friend.

Your Notes for Join the Bandwagon Appeal

9. Appeal to Practical Consequences

Game Book Definition

“An effort is made to persuade us to buy or believe by appealing to our concern for our own individual welfare; i.e., if we do as we are asked, we will secure certain beneficial consequences, while if we refuse to do as asked, the consequences will be harmful.”

Expanded Definition

- You should buy or believe for your own good; otherwise the results will be harmful.
- There is often an implicit or explicit threat that bad consequences will follow from doing or not doing something.
- The consequence does not have to be for you; it could be something that affects a friend or relative, your city or school, and so on.
- This is a “catch-all” category. If the consequences are not saving money (Bargain Appeal), obtaining status (Appeal to Prestige), being part of the crowd (Bandwagon Appeal), or any particular outcome covered by another technique of this section, answer Appeal to Practical Consequences.

Examples of Appeal to Practical Consequences not in ads

- a. Mother to Son: “John, if you don’t dry the dishes and put them away correctly, you will not go to the Springsteen Concert.”
- b. United States Ambassador to France: “If you do not let us base our nuclear missile sites within your borders, we would be forced to raise the import tax on all the goods we import from your nation.”

Comment: And if you still won’t cooperate, we’ll stop drinking French wine!

Example of Appeal to Practical Consequences in ads

- c. Ad: “Put your business into overdrive by attracting new customers and driving existing ones back for more. For a special offer, visit www.usps.com.”

Sometimes Appeal to Practical Consequences takes the form of Appeal to Fear.

Example of Appeal to Practical Consequences as Appeal to Fear

- d. Insurance agent to store owner: “Billy’s Bar down the block just burned down. He’s wiped out. Don’t you think you should have additional insurance protection in case the same thing should happen to you?”

Appeal to Practical Consequences can also be Appeal to Hope. “If you do X, Y may happen; therefore, if you want Y to happen, do X.”

Example of Appeal to Practical Consequences as Appeal to Hope

- e. Ad for the Indiana lottery: “Jan Simmons of Fort Wayne is set for life after winning \$2,000,000. The same good fortune can happen to you!”

Appeal to Practical Consequences can resemble Appeal to Pity. Dire results will befall the person or group that is the object of the pity. I'll fail the course, lose my job, be evicted from my apartment, or children will starve, my mother will not get the operation she needs, and so on. However, with Appeal to Pity, I ask for pity on *me* or on a person or cause I favor. With Practical Consequences, I argue that the listener should do or not do something based on the consequences for *the listener*. (You'll lose your job, your health will improve, our city will have better leadership.)

Example of Appeal to Pity rather than Appeal to Practical Consequences

- f. Senator: "If we don't pass this emergency Defense Department budget bill, our troops in the Middle East will have to get by with less food and water. Their tanks will run out of gas in the desert and those manning the tanks will be picked off like flies."

Comment: The speaker asks his fellow legislators to have pity on the soldiers who will not be able to defend themselves (supposedly) without additional money. The senators will be far from the danger zone – the dangerous consequences will not affect them.

Example of Appeal to Practical Consequences rather than Appeal to Pity

- g. Democratic Senator to his fellow Democratic Senators in a private meeting: "If we don't vote for more money for the troops in Iraq, we will pay the price at the polls in November."

Comment: This Senator argues for what is best for the political future of himself and his listeners.

If an example offers a way to *earn* more money, the answer is Appeal to Practical Consequences and not Bargain Appeal, which refers to *saving* money.

Example of Appeal to Practical Consequences rather than Bargain Appeal

- h. Buy one of the new U.S. Mint Silver Eagle coins. They will only grow in value.

Comment: The example implies that you will earn a profit by selling the coins at a higher price in the future. Even if this were true, couldn't I make more money by investing in something else? *This example is appropriate for Junior/Senior only.*

If an example provides sound advice about making a choice, the answer is No Technique. This is also the answer if the speaker merely offers a suggestion or opinion based on wise experience.

Examples of No Technique rather than Appeal to Practical Consequences

- i. The way I see it, you people can choose either the Republican or the Democrat. You, however, must decide which person best meets the needs of our state in the future. All party-bashing aside, you must figure out which of these two has placed our state first and party affiliation second. Then make your choice.

Comment: The advice given is what any conscientious voter should do in each election.

- j. I think that maximum health comes from eating right, exercising regularly, and mental relaxation. You might want to try that combination.

Comment: The speaker is not selling anything but rather offers a suggestion based on solid experience.

Your Notes for Appeal to Practical Consequences

10. Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious

Game Book Definition

“The arguer states a series of propositions. The early ones are readily acceptable to the audience or reader, but the concluding statement may be dubious. The listener or reader is expected to accept blindly the later ones because he has accepted those which came before.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“If we have unhesitatingly accepted several propositions closely following one after the other, that acceptance tends to break down our resistance to a questionable proposition which follows. We have been saying ‘Yes, Yes, Yes.’ Now it is so much easier to say ‘Yes’ again without looking to see what we are saying ‘Yes’ to.”

Expanded Definition

- “Dubious” means “doubtful” or “questionable.”
- The listener is “led down the path” and lulled by general statements that he agrees with. Then the argument ends with a “zinger” that is not acceptable.

Examples of Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious

- a. Stay healthy. Take mild exercise every day. Walk whenever possible. Eat balanced meals. Get restful sleep on ‘Nities Sleep-well Mattress.

Comment: “Stay healthy.” Sure. “Take mild exercise every day.” Good idea. “Walk whenever possible.” Sound advice. “Eat balance meals.” Everybody wants to do that. “Get restful sleep on ‘Nities Sleep-well Mattress.” Of cour... wait a minute!

- b. It is your right to vote. Democracy is built on the principle of free and frequent elections. When the people do not exercise their rights, democracy is fading. Cast your vote this fall for Elvis Wayne.

Comment: You’ve convinced me to vote. But why should I vote for Elvis?

In form, Appeal to Flattery can resemble Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious. However, the “acceptable” statements in Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious are *general* in nature and uncontroversial whereas Appeal to Flattery begins with *specific* statements about you that you want to accept because they build up your ego.

Example of Appeal to Flattery rather than Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious

- c. Mary, you are such an expert here. Your stuff always comes out looking super. You have that creative touch. Our boss needs this presentation ready by Friday. Can you help me get it done by Thursday night?

Comment: The speaker does throw in a “zinger” at the end after buttering up Mary. However, the first three sentences do not express general truths but rather the speaker’s favorable (and individual) opinions about Mary.

Example of Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious rather than Appeal to Flattery

- d. “Intelligent people want to learn as much as possible about the world they live in. Dedicated people want to do superior work. The *Wall Street Journal* offers intelligent, dedicated people the information they need to progress in their careers.”

Comment: Two acceptable *general* statements precede the dubious one.

Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious must be distinguished from Join the Bandwagon Appeal. Bandwagon Appeal gives *one* acceptable statement (“everyone’s doing it”) before the dubious conclusion (“so should you”). Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious lists *two or more* general statements before dropping the “zinger.”

Example of Join the Bandwagon Appeal rather than Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious

- e. Ad: “Drink Pepsi, the most popular drink of your generation!”

Comment: Most people drink Pepsi. So should you!

Example of Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious rather than Join the Bandwagon Appeal

- f. Today’s big trend is toward a new, more lively leisure. People are getting more out of life. This is thinking young. Join the fun. Think young. Say, “Pepsi, please!”

Comment: The first four sentences invite you to get in step with your contemporaries. However, the form of the example fits Acceptable to Dubious because the opening statements gain your agreement before the product is introduced at the end.

Your Notes for Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious