

|| || || ETHOS || || ||

ETHOS (N.) –

A rhetorical appeal utilized by the speaker to reinforce their credibility and the reader's trust.

RECOGNIZING ETHOS:

- When searching for ethos, one rule must be kept in mind: the selected quote must be reinforcing the credibility of the **speaker**, or the one who spoke **that specific quote**.
- The ethos will always be **positively** impacting the speaker's credibility. Otherwise, it is not ethos.
- Look for keywords like the first person pronouns: **I and We**.

EXAMPLE 1:

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. **I do not shrink from this responsibility**-- I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it. And the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

-Excerpt from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, delivered on January 20, 1961

Kennedy compares his presidential potential to others within this quote from his inaugural address. He uses ethos to increase his credibility as a decisive, strong-willed president to ease the concerns of those unsure about how he will protect their nation.

EXAMPLE 2:

We aren't going to let any mace stop us. **We are masters in our nonviolent movement** in disarming police forces; they don't know what to do. I've seen them so often. I remember in Birmingham, Alabama, when we were in that majestic struggle there, we would move out of the 16th Street Baptist Church day after day; by the hundreds we would move out. And Bull Connor would tell them to send the dogs forth, and they did come; but we just went before the dogs singing, "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around."

-Excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech, delivered on April 3, 1968

King reveals a lot about himself and the Civil Rights Movement in the highlighted quote. He uses ethos here to depict his experience and composure in conflict. He also reveals that as a leader, he has great faith in his followers to conduct themselves as properly as he does.