

## **Rhetoric, from the *Oxford English Dictionary***

**1. a.** The art of using language so as to persuade or influence others; the body of rules to be observed by a speaker or writer in order that he may express himself with eloquence.

**b.** *fig.* or with personification.

**c.** A treatise on, or 'body' of, rhetoric.

**d.** The top class or the second class (from the top) in certain English Roman Catholic schools and colleges.

**e.** Literary prose composition, esp. as a school exercise.

**2. a.** Elegance or eloquence of language; eloquent speech or writing. *Obs.*

**b.** Speech or writing expressed in terms calculated to persuade; hence (often in depreciatory sense), language characterized by artificial or ostentatious expression.

**c. pl.** Elegant expressions; rhetorical flourishes. Also, rhetorical terms.

**d.** in ironical or jocular use.

**e. transf. and fig.,** said esp. (*a*) of the expressive action of the body in speaking; (*b*) of the persuasiveness of looks or acts; (*c*) of artistic style or technique.

**3.** Skill in or faculty of using eloquent and persuasive language. *Obs.*

**4. attrib. and Comb.**