

Metaphors: Water as a metaphorical vehicle

P: To review literary and musical metaphors of water and consider their use in a political speech.

A: Members of the campaign staff (imagined).

G: Business memo (email).

E: Analyze existing metaphors using water and decide whether they represent good or bad qualities.

Exigence: "I want to analyze an existing metaphor involving water and determine how it could be used in a political speech."

Subject matter: What are metaphors? How do we recognize them? What are the parts of a metaphor?

Discourse Community: Speech writers.

Genre: Business memo (email). Typically used in hierarchical organizations to report on new information and pass that information through the organization. The new information is usually factual or numerical; the usual rhetorical appeal is logic.

Situation: You're a research assistant working with speech writers for a politician running for office. You receive the following email from the politician's campaign organizer: "The boss is headed Wednesday to an event that will combine a bridge dedication and a campaign rally. When he talks about the new bridge, he wants to toss in a reference to water, either comparing his policies favorably to water, or else comparing our opponents unfavorably to water. Could you look into references to water by (**author or songwriter**) and suggest some options?"

Instructions: How has "water" or its common natural forms (ocean, river, lake, rain) been used as a metaphor to represent good or bad qualities of something else?

Find (conduct research!) instances of metaphors that use water as a vehicle; describe the context and meaning of the metaphor; list the entailments (grounds) shared by the tenor and water. Are the qualities of the entailments good (positive, desirable, beneficial) or bad (negative, unwanted, harmful)? **You may choose to conduct research on your favorite author, poet, or songwriter.**

Writing Process: You will receive instruction on the research process, including how to find references to water in music, literature, or poetry. In class we will examine references to water from music, so that we can decide, is it a metaphorical reference? If so, what is the tenor of the metaphor, and what are the entailments of water that are also assigned to the tenor. During the drafting process you will revisit this analysis during peer review.