

## Argument Analysis: Appeals to nostalgia

Nostalgia is a sentimental longing for the past, an affection for days long ago.

In persuasive writing, nostalgia is often used to evoke memories of childhood or simpler times. These feelings of warmth, security and familiarity can be used by writers to build support for a particular point of view. When you are reading persuasive texts, it's easy to identify appeals to nostalgia because writers often describe the past in a favorable and optimistic light, leveraging these memories of warmth and security to compel readers to return to simpler times.

### Appeals to nostalgia in action

**Activity:** Read the following opinion piece, identify persuasive techniques, including an appeal to nostalgia, and explain the effect they may have on the intended audience.

## Reading more relevant than ever

Caitlin McKenzie, September 7, 2021

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Let's face it, life was better in the eighties. Weekends spent without smartphones or streaming services, meant we often spent long, lazy afternoons reading books. Escaping to a deserted island or traveling through space was as easy as opening the pages of a paperback.

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When we were kids, books allowed us to break the gravitational field of boredom and launch ourselves into a universe of imagination. Books were booster rockets for language skills, deep thought and sustained attention. These days, the insidious growth of screen time means that many children have been left on the launchpad.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see we've got a problem.

A 2019 study by the United States National Literacy Trust found that fewer and fewer children enjoy reading. Screen time isn't inherently bad, it simply consumes time children would otherwise have spent lost in a book.

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According to the 2019 report 'Growing Up in Australia', thirteen year olds spend almost thirty per cent of their waking hours in front of a screen. Social media, video games and streaming services are devouring huge, greedy chunks

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of time children may have spent engaging in other activities, including reading.

Managing screen time is challenging enough as an adult. Whenever I sit down with a book, my reading time is invariably under attack by a barrage of pings, notifications, tweets, messages and emails. Under this constant bombardment, my attention span has become

something like a war torn city besieged by amusing memes and funny cat videos. What effect do you think this technology has on our kids?

Reading is more important than ever.

New research suggests that regular reading helps deal with stress. According to a study by the National Literacy Trust, sixty per cent of children agreed that reading during pandemic-related lockdowns made them feel better.

Regular reading also helps build those skills invaluable for employment. Many of the jobs that children will work in have yet to be invented. Skills cultivated through regular reading—including literacy, creativity and critical thinking—will help children find meaningful employment in the future. Reading also makes you a better person. Various studies have demonstrated that, by encouraging you to understand the inner lives and feelings of characters, reading fiction increases your ability to empathize with others. As George RR Martin once wrote: "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. The man who never reads lives only one." Increased empathy, in turn, leads to improved relationships.

It seems there are a million reasons to put down your phone and pick up a book.

It's time to fight back against these attacks on our attention, time to set a good example for our kids, time to switch off our devices and plug into a good book.

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## Argument Analysis: Reading more relevant than ever

Read the article 'Reading more relevant than ever'. Identify the issue, contention, audience and tone of the piece. Identify the persuasive techniques in the piece and explain the effect they are intended to have on the audience.

**Issue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contention:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Audience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_

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