

The Art of Persuasion: A Speech by Leo the Lion

Learning objective: To identify and analyse the features of a persuasive speech, including rhetorical devices and emotive language.

Read the speech below carefully. Consider how the speaker uses language to influence the audience's feelings and thoughts. Answer the questions in full sentences, providing evidence from the text where required.

Citizens of the Great Meadow, look around you! Do you see the wilting wildflowers and the dusty, cracked earth? Our home, once a vibrant tapestry of colour, is fading. I, Leo, stand before you today not just as a leader, but as a neighbour who remembers the sweet scent of blooming clover and the refreshing coolness of the stream. We have allowed our shared habitat to become neglected, yet we possess the power to restore its former glory. Will we stand idly by while our meadow withers, or will we unite to plant, protect, and preserve? Imagine a future where the butterflies return in clouds of iridescent wings and the river hums with life once more. It requires only our collective effort. Let us roll up our sleeves and nurture our land, for we are the guardians of this meadow. Together, we can transform this landscape into a sanctuary that thrives for generations to come. Why wait for tomorrow when we can plant the seeds of change today?

Word bank: rhetorical · persuasive · emotive · audience · impact · advocate · conviction

1. Identify two specific features of the meadow that Leo mentions have changed for the worse. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. Find and write down the rhetorical question Leo uses at the end of his speech. (1 mark) (1 mark)

3. Why does Leo describe the meadow as a 'vibrant tapestry' in the past, but 'dusty' now? What is he trying to make the audience feel? (3 marks) (3 marks)

4. Explain why Leo chooses to refer to himself as a 'neighbour' rather than just a 'leader'. (2 marks) (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Does Leo's speech successfully persuade the audience to act? Refer to at least one piece of language used to support your opinion. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Before and After' scene of the Great Meadow: one side showing the dusty, cracked earth Leo describes, and the other side showing the vibrant, blooming sanctuary he envisions.



Extension challenge: Write a short persuasive paragraph (50-80 words) from the perspective of Bea the Honeybee, supporting Leo's speech. Use at least two pieces of emotive language and one rhetorical question to convince the other animals to help.