

Question 2

Margaret Thatcher's Eulogy
for
Ronald Reagan

Presenter

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Key Points

- Understand the rhetorical situation
- Explain how each strategy conveys purpose and effect
- Provide appropriate evidence to support assertions
- Indicate awareness of audience
- Avoid being trope “heavy”
- Move chronologically through the speech to avoid being formulaic in structure
- Look for “big picture” argument and explain how she develops it.

Sample opening paragraph

- The death of Ronald Reagan signified the loss of an idol to the American people. Reagan is legacy of charm and optimism still exists today in the hearts of many Americans. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher memorializes this in her 2004 eulogy through the use of caricature, parallelism, and emotionally charged language.

Body Paragraph Two

- As soon as someone passes away, they become memorialized in an extremely gracious way, sometimes almost martyred or fictionalized. Margaret Thatcher creates a caricature of Ronald Reagan, reinventing him as a symbol for all of America and its “large-hearted magnanimity,” which is ironic considering his treatment of the lower class. Thatcher also exaggerates Reagan’s foreign policy during the Cold War era to emphasize his “candid and tough” policies on the Soviet Union. She also refers to his infamous use “god-language” through his quote “whatever time I’ve got left belongs to the big fella upstairs.” Thatcher’s caricaturizing continues when she states that “when the world threw problems at the White House, he was not baffled or disoriented or overwhelmed. He almost instinctively knew what to do.” This is also ironic considering Reagan’s Alzheimer’s disease. Overall, Thatcher paints a heroic and idealized picture of Reagan as a representative of “the American people.”

Addressing the effect

- “Thatcher’s emotionally charged diction draws on the emotional sensitivity of an audience struck by loss.”
- “This linguistic appeal to nationalism strengthens America’s connection to Reagan.”
- “...repeat the sentence structure “others...he...” referring to Reagan’s critics and subsequently his success in overcoming them. This stresses his capability for proving people wrong.
- “...the “yes, he...but...”...defends his more controversial positions and qualifies them with his great ones.