Explaining & Arguing

Explaining Things:
- Expository with observation, ideas, facts, scientific data, and statistics
- Limit scope and make specific
- Thesis: what paper is about with focus, unity and coherence
- Strategies: define, describe, classify and divide, analyze, cause and effect, compare and contrast
  - Define: identify it--formal dictionary--often used with other rhetorical (speech) strategies
  - Describe: create a verbal image (senses) from general to specific or specific to general
  - Compare (find similarities) and contrast (find differences)
    - Point to point: back and forth between points
    - Discuss one work completely, then next, then draw comparisons and contrasts
  - Process: sequence from beginning to end
  - Analogy: similarities between objects and ideas not usually associated
  - Divide and classify
    - Group items according to shared characteristics
    - Classify: put in category or class
    - Divide: break into parts
  - Cause and effect: Why? This is the question with the thesis as an answer.
    - Examine outcomes and reasons for outcomes
  - Organize logically and maintain neutrality

Arguing a Position:
- Controversial Issues: Pros and cons, thesis and antithesis with a synthesis as a compromise
- Claims and counterclaims: examine counterclaims; perhaps delay thesis
  - Rogerian argument: even hostile readers respect you if you seek to understand their position
- Evidence: makes claim believable with facts, examples and testimony
  - Facts and examples: verifiable and illustrative
  - Inferences: give information meaning
  - Expert opinion: cite credentials
  - Personal testimony
- Reasoning: consider audience, establish credibility as fair and trustworthy, use logic and avoid fallacies
- Organizing: Introduce and explain the issue; pose a question
- Assert thesis, summarize and refute counterclaims, support claims with evidence
- Restate position as conclusion
- Persuasive appeals
  - Ethos: responsible use of sources and tone can give credibility to the writer
    - Vitiolic diatribes rarely bring respect and trust
  - Logos: reasoning and evidence must be flawless
    - Claim: must be qualified or limited
    - Support: from broad reasons to specific data and details
    - Warrants: know your own underlying assumptions
  - Pathos: feelings and emotion
    - Appeals to values and beliefs
    - Use honest examples geared toward reality