

**RHETORICAL
STRATEGIES:**

PARADOX

PARADOX

Definition:

- ❖ a *seemingly* contradictory, unbelievable, or absurd statement that can be explained or shown as true;
- ❖ “a contradictory statement that involves truth—often a surprising truth” (156).

PARADOX

Examples: (from the text book)

- ❖ **Love “hurts so good.”**
- ❖ **The end is the beginning.**
 - graduation/commencement
 - door closed/window opened
- ❖ **A bad experience can bring hope and joy.**
 - good from bad
 - all things for good
- ❖ **Life at a private college is more public than private.**
- ❖ **“The universe is the same for all of us and different for each of us.”**
- ❖ **Less is more.**
- ❖ **Winning is like losing sometimes.**
- ❖ **You need to lose yourself to find yourself.**

PARADOX

“Ambiguous Thinking”:

- ❖ “ambiguous” = confusing, unclear, indefinite
- ❖ “ambiguous” = 2 or more possible meanings

- ❖ Creative thinking
- ❖ Critical thinking
- ❖ *thinking outside the box*
- ❖ *taking the road less traveled*

PARADOX

“Ambiguous Thinking”:

- o half of “8” = 4
 - o $8 \div 2, 4 \times 2$
 - o $4+4, 5+3, 6+2, 7+1$
 - o $[4+(3+1)]$
- o OR, to use “ambiguous thinking” -
 - o 0
 - o 3
 - o E
 - o eig
 - o ght

PARADOX

OXYMORON:

- ❖ usually 2 words (*not* a statement)
- ❖ the combination of incongruous or contradictory terms
 - o “sharp” + “stupid”
 - o deafening silence
 - o jumbo shrimp

PARADOX

CONTRADICTION:

- ❖ a logically incongruous statement;
- ❖ one that joins contraries or opposites;
- ❖ like a paradox, this requires further explanation
- ❖ (examples from the text book)
 - A wise man is foolish. (A foolish man is wise.)
 - You can feel close to someone who is far away.
 - Pride can be both a good and evil concept.
 - Someone or something can be
 - strong yet weak (weak yet strong)
 - beautiful yet ugly (ugly yet beautiful)
 - kind yet cruel
 - afraid yet brave
 - happy yet sad

PARADOX

Why Use *Paradox* in Your Essay:

❖ in your Introduction

- o to grab the readers' attention,
- o to stimulate their interest or curiosity,
- o to get them to continue to read your work

PARADOX

Why Use *Paradox* in Your Essay:

- ❖ as an interesting or unique way to approach your topic, subject, claim
 - o by explaining your paradox you are making a (larger) point, claim

PARADOX

Why Use *Paradox* in Your Essay:

- ❖ to avoid “either/or thinking” (black/white thinking)
 - o to avoid “false dilemmas”
 - o to avoid being overly simplistic, overly reductionist
 - o to demonstrate that more than 2 sides exist on an issue



END