Rhetorical Situation & Genre

Because a writer wants to accomplish something specific with readers, he/she analyzes the situation in which the communication can/will/may happen and chooses appropriate writing tools to influence readers, to see, think, feel, understand, believe, act differently.

Exigence->writer->analyzes->chooses->uses->genre->readers->purpose

Demonstrate your ability to use their analyses of rhetorical situations to identify options and to communicate situation. It accounts for more parts of a situation that we would analyze as we make decisions about our communications, or actions.

Elements of the rhetorical situation:

1. **Exigence:** What is the issue? What happens or fails to happen? Why is one compelled to speak out?
2. **Persons:** Who is involved in the exigence and what roles do they play? Are they also part of the audience?
3. **Relations:** What are the relationships, especially the differences in power, between the persons involved?
4. **Medium/Channel/Delivery System, Location:** Where is the site of discourse? E.g. a podium, newspaper, web page, social media, etc.
5. **Writer/Speaker:** Who is compelled to speak or write?
6. **Readers, Audience:** Who does the speaker address and why?
7. **Writing/multi modes/Genre/Method:** How does the writer/speaker choose to address the audience?
8. **Conventions/rules/institutions:** What are the rules of the game surrounding/constraining numbers 1-7?

Analyzing the rhetorical situation (which, at its most fundamental, means identifying the elements above) can tell us much about speakers, their situations, and their persuasive intentions. (And about choices we have as we decide how to communicate or act in the situation).

From <http://rhetorica.net/kairos.htm> (very “dated” website, though the information is still valid/current)