



# Reader Engagement

TIPS FOR SPECIFICITY & PERSONAL CONNECTION

# AVOID THESE GENERALITIES

- ▶ Many people
- ▶ There are
- ▶ Some people
- ▶ Studies show
- ▶ Scientists say
- ▶ *We* (exception: group writing)
- ▶ Too much *YOU*
- ▶ Everyone has/says/feels
- ▶ Society, culture, etc.

# CHOOSE ACTIVE OVER PASSIVE

- ▶ Active, clear verbs – MOTION
- ▶ Cut down on unnecessary helping verbs
- ▶ Eliminate past tense (unless conventions dictate or perspective/sequencing is affected)
- ▶ Keep subjects acting/moving instead of being acted upon

# USE STORY

- ▶ Storytelling is EVERYTHING
- ▶ We think of story as retelling a “specific event in time and place where informational texts deal with that which is generally true.” - Tom Newkirk, *Minds Made for Stories*
- ▶ Harness this power

# DON'T FORGET APPEALS

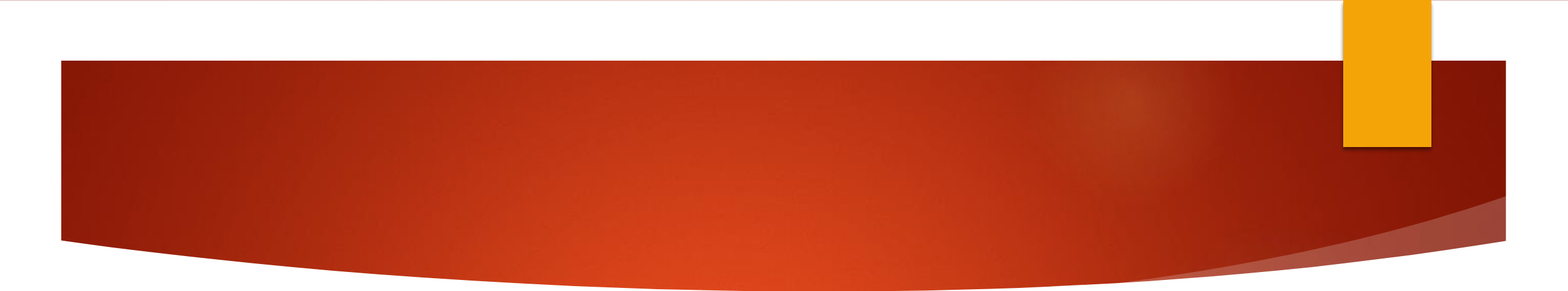
▶ **LOGOS**

▶ **ETHOS**

▶ **PATHOS**

▶ Does generalization build these? (hint: w/o research there are TOO many questions)

▶ Does storytelling (not necessarily fiction) build these?



WE OFTEN *THINK* WE ARE KEEPING OPTIONS “OPEN”  
FOR READERS BY BEING GENERAL – THAT WE ARE  
SOMEHOW “LETTING THEM IN.” BUT MORE OFTEN, WE  
GIVE THEM A WAY “OUT” AND WE DISTANCE THEM  
FROM THE POINT WE HOPE TO MAKE.

WE CONNECT WITH READERS THROUGH BEING  
PERSONAL, SPECIFIC, TELLING “STORY.”