

# The Presentation: The Other Multimodal Component



In “Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Retweeted,” Malcolm Gladwell argues that social media activism is a “networked, weak-tie[d]” attempt at what he thinks true activism is. In other words, what people are doing on social media won’t actually affect real change because of the lack of structure, depth, and close personal involvement with a select issue. Ashley J. Holmes acknowledges the merits of this claim but argues that there’s a bit more nuance to the situation in her article “Public Writing for Social Change.” Holmes compares public writing to a snowflake that can either melt away on contact or land on a rolling snowball and add to its heft. For Holmes, public writing via social media has the potential to propel an issue a bit further, a bit closer to getting solved or considered.

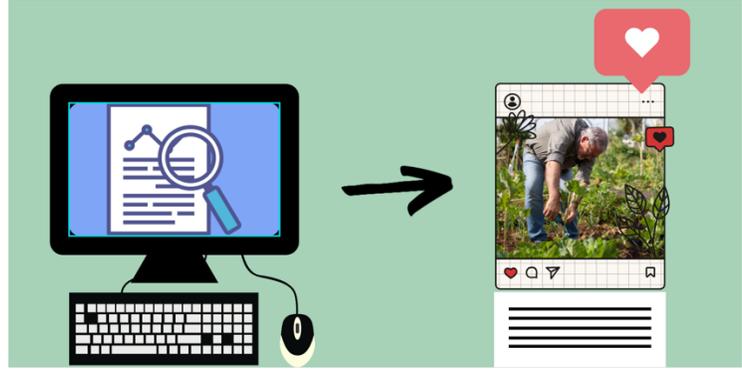


Both authors make valid claims about the nature of activism, what it takes, and what can help it. But, the reality is that social media has become the town square of our widely dispersed society, the place where people can voice what they care about or notice and the place to give weight to an issue that others may not have known anything about beforehand. For your research paper, you selected a problem or

issue that (hopefully) meant something to you. You wrote quite a bit about it. Now, I’d like to see you condense that argument and consider what shape your argument would take on a social media platform of your choice.

Your issue needs addressing, right? How would you argue for this on a social media platform? How do you move people rather than irritate them?

This reshaping of argument is called **multimodal adaptation**—taking a piece of rhetoric and translating it for a different audience in a different format. You'll be doing this at least two ways here at the end of the semester: in your presentation and in this social media adaptation that you'll include *in* your presentation.



Here are the basics of what I'd like to see in your presentation.

- **Your post should reflect consideration of the rhetorical situation:** who is the specific audience, what's the purpose, what's the context. These should inform the platform you choose and what you create.
- You can talk about your social media adaptation at any point in your presentation, but **you must provide a visual of the adaptation and a brief explanation of what's going on.**
- You do not need to post on your personal account on a platform unless you choose to do so. **If you choose not to post on your own account or create a different one to use for this project, you can create a "post" on Google Slides, PowerPoint, or Canva.** The tools provided in these platforms can help you make something that would look similar to what we would see on an Instagram platform, for example. This latter option will obviously take more time.

*For more work on the rhetorical situation, we'll complete a worksheet that challenges you to look at pieces of a social media post that is making an argument and consider the interdiscursive properties of the post..*