

A related example is the *Hipster Llama* meme (see below). *Hipster Llama* appears in many variations online. Like most memes, authorship is not identified. Rather, the meme can be revised, remixed, and shared repeatedly and anonymously online. To unpack this particular meme, let's first consider that a person or persons composed it (or revised an existing version of it). Like all composers, the meme creators worked within a **rhetorical situation**. Let's start by asking: What are the meme creators doing, and why? What are some decisions they have made as composers? Following is a preliminary reading:

- The composers are providing a commentary (**purpose**).
- They are communicating to like-minded readers on the Internet (**audience**).
- They are using humor and satire to connect with their audience (drawing on the **rhetorical appeal**, *pathos*).
- They are working with both text and imagery (**mode**) and delivering the composition digitally, online (**medium**).

Now, let's think about the composers' **choice of genre**. What are memes? How do they function? What are their typical qualities and conventions?

- Memes often parody or poke fun at something or someone. They take many forms but often feature an image and a brief caption written in informal language (**elements and style**).
- Often an image is prominent, and the words — typically what the subject of the meme is saying or thinking — are presented in a large display font (**design**).
- Memes draw on current topics and popular culture (**sources**).

Here we provide a partial reading of the *Hipster Llama* meme. Notice the structure of the annotations in the margins. This is a “guided reading,” a feature we discuss in detail in the next section.

## Guided Reading | Meme

Author Unknown, *Hipster Llama*

RHETORICAL SITUATION & CHOICES	GENRE CONVENTIONS
<b>PURPOSE</b> The composer of <i>Hipster Llama</i> memes poke fun at hipsters, making fun of things hipsters say, their values, and specifically, their haircuts. This particular meme focuses on the stereotype that hipsters are more concerned with exploring their aesthetic sides than on focusing on paid work, and are perhaps more concerned with their personal style than what they produce.	<b>What is the composer of <i>Hipster Llama</i> doing?</b> The composer of <i>Hipster Llama</i> chose to create a meme. What are the conventions of a meme? To what extent is the composer adhering to them?
<b>AUDIENCE</b> Because hipsters are often self-referentially ironic, it's likely that hipsters themselves are an audience. People who make fun of hipsters are also clearly part of the audience.	<b>ELEMENTS OF THE GENRE</b> Humor: Memes are designed to be humorous. The composer of the <i>Hipster Llama</i> memes use humor to poke fun at a particular group. <b>Repetition:</b> This meme is part of a series. Viewers can instantly recognize the use of the llama and the fact that this is a part of a larger series. <b>Social media:</b> Memes are distributed online. They can be sent by e-mail, posted on a blog, or shared on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
<b>RHETORICAL APPEALS</b> The humor in the meme is an appeal to <i>pathos</i> because	<b>STYLE</b> The text in this meme uses a <i>conversational</i> tone. Additionally, the text in a meme is fairly brief, as is the case here. <b>DESIGN</b> <b>Visual with text.</b> The llama is the center of focus, with the text

